

WILD WEST

WEEKLY

A MAGAZINE CONTAINING STORIES, SKETCHES Etc. OF WESTERN LIFE.

HARRY E. WOLFF, PUBLISHER, 166 WEST 23D STREET, NEW YORK.

No. 805.

NEW YORK, MARCH 22, 1918.

Price SIX CENTS

YOUNG WILD WEST PAYING THE PAWNEES;

OR, ARIETTA HELD FOR RANSOM.

AND OTHER STORIES

By AN OLD SCOUT.



Wild had just succeeded in dragging the helpless form of Arietta from the cave when four Indians rushed from behind the rocks. With the quickness of a tiger, he sent one whirling over the cliff. "Back, you red hounds!" he cried.

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Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$3.00 per year. Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1918, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C., by Harry E. Wolff, Publisher, 166 West 23d Street, New York. Entered at the New York, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Matter.

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Young Wild West Paying the Pawnees

—OR—

ARIETTA HELD FOR RANSOM

By AN OLD SCOUT

CHAPTER I.

PREPARING FOR AN ATTACK FROM THE PAWNEE INDIANS.

It was a cool, sunshiny day in the fall a few years ago that a party consisting of seven might have been seen riding along a tortuous trail in the mountains of northern New Mexico.

The bracing air of the mountains lent a color of health and vigor to their cheeks, and three of the party being females attired in gay colors, the wildness of the scenery that surrounded them made them look picturesque and dashing in the extreme.

The leader of the seven was a handsome, athletic boy of perhaps twenty, whose long chestnut hair hung below his shoulders, lending him the appearance of one who, in spite of his youthfulness, had experienced a varied life on the boundless plains and mountains of the great West.

And this was indeed the case, for the boy was no other than the famous Champion Deadshot of the West and Prince of the Saddle, Young Wild West!

This young hero had no equal in his particular line of business, and many were the thrilling and hairbreadth escapes he had passed through.

Strong, active, quick as a flash, daring even unto recklessness and cool at any stage of the game, Young Wild West was a person to be emulated and admired by all who believe in fair play and an honesty of purpose.

He was attired in a neat-fitting suit of buckskin that was rather gaudily trimmed with a scarlet fringe, wore a wide-brimmed sombrero that sat rakishly on the back of his head, and was armed with a Winchester repeating rifle, a brace of Colt's revolvers and a hunting-knife.

The horse he was riding was one of the finest specimens of its kind, it being a clean-limbed sorrel stallion that showed signs of great speed and endurance.

Riding at our hero's side was his sweetheart, Arietta Muddock, a very pretty blonde miss of seventeen or eighteen.

Arietta was a true Western girl, and she could shoot with a rifle or revolver, or ride a horse as well as the average man.

She was very cool and brave, too, and her ready wit had gotten her out of many dangers.

Behind Young Wild West and his pretty sweetheart rode Jim Dart, a young Westerner about the same age as our hero, and his sweetheart, Eloise Gardner.

Jim was attired in a similar fashion to the leader of the party, and, having been born and reared on the plains of Wyoming, he was every inch a boy of the West.

Eloise was a rather delicate young girl, who was becoming used to the ways of the wild West. She was a brunette and was in direct contrast to Arietta.

The third couple of the party were Cheyenne Charlie and his wife, Anna.

Cheyenne Charlie was an ex-government scout and Indian fighter. He was slightly over six feet in height, straight as an arrow and active and courageous.

His age was in the neighborhood of thirty, and his wife, who was inclined to be a little stout, was some five years his junior and very attractive in appearance.

The scout wore an attire similar to that of our hero and Jim Dart, and he, as well as the girls, was well armed.

The seventh of the party was a Chinaman, who was riding a piebald mule and leading two pack-horses that were loaded with a camping outfit.

Any one to look at the Chinaman would have seen nothing different in him than the average of his race, except, perhaps, that the expression of his yellow face was more child-like and innocent than the general run of such faces.

This was Hop Wah, the trusted servant of Young Wild West.

At the time of which we write Indian outbreaks were common occurrences and the wilderness of northern New Mexico and other parts of the West served as a hiding-place for lawless white men, who made their living by preying upon miners and travelers.

The unwritten law was that a horse thief should be hanged the minute he was caught, and the time-honored principle that "self-defense is the first law of nature" was shown up in its fullness.

Many were the cases where an honest man had to "kill his man" or be killed himself.

Though his main headquarters were at Weston, Dakota, where he owned a big tract of mining land, Young Wild West made frequent tours through the wildest part of the country west of the Mississippi, sometimes on business and sometimes in search of adventure.

Occasionally he took with him, besides his two partners, Cheyenne Charlie and Jim Dart, the three ladies, or girls, as he always called them in speaking of them.

Though it was dangerous to travel around in the wild parts, the girls were quite used to it, and they were always capable and willing to put up a fight when attacked.

As we find them our friends are making a journey by horseback to a ranch owned by Young Wild West which was located in the western part of Texas on the banks of the Rio Grande.

They were still a long way from their destination, but that did not bother them.

There was plenty of game to be shot on the way, and every few days they came to a civilized place, thus enabling them to keep a supply of the provisions they would need.

For the past two days they had been following a trail without meeting a human being, for it was a wild country, as has already been stated.

The afternoon was well advanced when Young Wild West suddenly came to a halt and held up his hand.

Instantly all hands reined in their steeds and looked at him questioning.

Without a word he pointed to a thin column of smoke that was rising above the treetops probably a mile distant.

The boy's sharp eyes had caught sight of this before any of the rest noticed it.

"Injuns!" remarked Cheyenne Charlie, laconically.

Young Wild West nodded.

"I guess so," he answered.

Then he cast a look around as far as the eye could reach. Even as he looked another column of smoke suddenly appeared about a mile off to the right.

It came from behind a little cone-shaped hill in a comparatively clear spot.

"That is the answer," he observed. "The Pawnees are on the warpath, just as we heard they were at the last place we stopped at. Well, I guess we are likely to see something of them before long. There is no doubt that they have seen us, and that the smoke signals mean that we are to be corralled by the redskins. I guess we had better be on the lookout."

This was said in such a cool and easy way that one would hardly be apt to think that any serious danger lurked near them.

But what could be more dangerous than to have a band of Pawnee Indians signaling to another to come and make ready to capture a small party of whites?

What show could the seven have with a score or more of savage red men, the average person would ask.

But Young Wild West and his two faithful partners had fought and whipped many a band of Indians, and that is why they were not so greatly alarmed now.

"Well, which way do we go, Wild?" asked Cheyenne Charlie.

"Right ahead," was the reply. "As soon as we find a good place we will halt and go into camp. It isn't likely the redskins will bother us before dark, so the quicker we find a suitable spot to camp the more time we will have to get ready for them."

"That's it!" exclaimed Jim Dart. "All we want is but a chance and we will make the Pawnees sick if they do bother us."

"I never had the least idea that we would find any hostile Indians on the journey," remarked Arietta. "But there is never any telling just when the red scoundrels break and go on the warpath. Well, I am ready to give you all the help I can, anyhow," and the brave girl placed her hand on the rifle that hung over her shoulder and nodded decisively.

"That's right, Et," answered her dashing young lover. "You are as good as any man living, when it comes to drawing a bead on a creeping redskin. Anna and Eloise have always been able to help a little, too, and if it comes to the worst I expect to hear you three cracking away at a great rate. Always remember, though, to never pull a trigger unless you've got your man covered. We can't afford to waste any lead in a skirmish with redskins."

"I am sure that I shall do my best, Wild," said Eloise, nervously. "I can shoot very well now, and I am proud of it."

"And if I shoot an Indian or two it will not be the first time," spoke up Anna.

Cheyenne Charlie nodded patronizingly.

"That's right, gal," he said. "I've made a real Western gal of you, an' I'm proud of it."

Of course this sort of talk did not tend to add to the fears of the girls.

On the other hand, it made them more courageous.

Young Wild West gave the word and they started along the trail.

"Just get the pack-horses off that snail-pace they have been going on all day, Hop," our hero called out to the Chinaman. "There is going to be some lively work before the sun rises again, if I am not mistaken. You have got to be on the lookout, or you may lose your pigtail. The Pawnees like Chinamen's scalps, so I have heard."

"Me no 'fraid of Pawnees," replied the Celestial. "Me shootee velly slaight; me killee six, ten, twelve ledskins allee samee' quickee yof say um Jack Robinson!"

"I bet you will!" sneered the scout. "You might drop one of 'em if he stays in front of you long enough to let you git a good aim on him."

Charlie did not dislike Hop Wah, but he had it in for him

because the Celestial had got the best of him in two or three little games of chance.

"Misler Charlie velly nicee man, but him findee out four kings no beatee um four aces," answered the Chinaman, smiling and looking at the sky.

This brought a laugh from all but the scout.

He gave a grunt of disgust and remained silent on the subject.

It was just about five o'clock when they reached a spot that was at least three miles from either of the smoke columns they had seen, which just suited Young Wild West for a camping-place.

It was at the foot of a towering cliff, with a shallow mountain stream near it.

Rocks and boulders were scattered around in profusion, and these would afford protection in case of an attack.

"Here we are!" exclaimed our hero. "Now get to work, all hands, and we'll soon have a snug little camp. It may be that we will have to remain here longer than to-night, for if the Pawnees are very thick around here it will be safer to remain than it will be to try to run the gauntlet."

Young Wild West never did anything by halves.

He believed in the old adage that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

He did not doubt in the least that they had been picked out by the villainous redskins to be attacked.

Under his orders Cheyenne Charlie took an axe from their outfit and proceeded to cut down a lofty pine.

When the tree was felled it was cut up into logs which were crisscrossed between two big rocks to form an effective barricade.

It took an hour to do this, and during that time the two tents had been erected.

All the while Young Wild West and his partners were working they were keeping a watch for some signs of the Indians.

But nothing happened, and when it finally came sunset they had a camp fixed up that would take more than a score of Indians to capture, to say the least.

Supper was ready now, for our hero knew it would be useless to try and conceal their location, and he let the Chinaman go ahead and make a fire.

If the Pawnees were after them they knew just where they were at that very minute.

It had just begun to grow dark when the hoot of an owl sounded from a clump of timber off to the left.

Then an answering cry came from behind a jutting point of rock almost in front of the camp.

"They are here!" exclaimed Young Wild West, in a low tone of voice. "Get ready for business, everybody!"

CHAPTER II.

WILD GOES OUT SCOUTING.

Young Wild West was so well versed in Indian tactics that he was certain that the owl-like cries had been given by Pawnees.

The fire that their supper had been cooked with had burned low, and at a word from the daring young deadshot some loose soil was thrown over it, extinguishing it completely.

All hands now had rifles in their hands with the exception of Hop Wah.

He did not carry a rifle, but he had a big six-shooter ready for business.

Wild cautioned the girls to keep close to the ground behind a big rock and then waited for the attack.

Five minutes slipped by.

All was silent, save the occasional cry of some wild animal and the gentle sighing of the pines overhead.

Then our friends suddenly heard the sounds made by a horse walking toward the camp.

This was rather unexpected.

Wild peered cautiously out and saw a mounted Indian approaching.

The stars were shining brightly and gave light enough for him to see that the Indian wore a big feathered headdress.

This meant that it was a chief who was paying them a visit.

When within fifty feet of the breastwork they had formed the rider brought his horse to a halt.

"Ugh!" came to the ears of those in the camp; "Big Chief Elk Horn wants to talk with palefaces. Ugh!"

Young Wild West knew that it was no use in trying to make it appear that there was no one there, so he promptly answered:

"Go ahead and talk, Elk Horn. The palefaces will listen to you."

"Elk Horn and his braves want money."

"Oh, you do, eh? Why don't you go to work and earn it, then? What are you doing so far from the reservation, anyhow? Better go back there before you get into trouble."

"Palefaces must give Elk Horn money!" exclaimed the chief, angrily. "We want hundred dollars; twenty braves want twenty dollars apiece."

"That's five hundred dollars, chief. It is altogether too much for us to give. You take my advice and go away, or you'll get something different from money. You seem to be a pretty shrewd redskin, but you can't scare us. You light out now! If you don't you'll drop off your horse so sudden that you will never know what struck you!"

"Ugh!"

That was all, and, wheeling his pony around, the Pawnee chief rode off in the darkness.

"Now, I suppose the fun will begin," said Wild, coolly. "Keep your eyes peeled, boys."

But Charlie and Jim hardly needed to be told this.

They were accustomed to peering through the darkness when the enemy was about, and they were now doing their utmost to note the approach of any one.

There were only two possible directions for the Pawnees to get close to them without making their presence known, as the cliff was directly at the back of the camp and the stream of water flowed at one side of it. There was a level stretch of fifty yards straight ahead and a sloping descent, which was well covered with pines, on the right.

Wild judged that the redskins would choose the latter place to make the attack from, since they would have the trees to shield them from the bullets that might be sent at them.

He was right, too, for the chief had not been gone more than three minutes when a wild yell sounded from the trees and a dozen or more rifles began cracking.

The bullets hit the rocks and embedded themselves in the logs our friends had cut, but did no further damage.

"Don't fire a shot until you can see the red demons," said Wild.

The words were scarcely out of his mouth when Cheyenne Charlie's rifle spoke and the death-cry of a Pawnee brave rang out.

"I seen one of ther measly coyotes an' I fetched him!" exclaimed the scout.

Another volley was fired from the clump of trees.

But the result was the same as the first.

Then the yells of the Indians were redoubled, and with a rush they came toward the camp, firing as they came.

Crack, crack, crack! Crac-e-c-ck!

All hands opened fire on the Pawnees and the result was that they got all that was coming to them.

The rush was checked and back they went.

"How did you like that, Elk Horn?" shouted our hero. "Do you still want the five hundred dollars?"

There was no reply.

Wild knew that at least half a dozen of the redskins had gone down in that wild rush they made, and he felt pretty certain that they would not attempt to rush upon the camp again.

A couple more like that and there would be very few of them left.

There had not been much over a score at the start.

"How do you feel, Elk Horn?" called out Wild, in a loud tone of voice. "Do you still feel as though you ought to have that five hundred dollars?"

There was no answer.

"Come on and get it, Elk Horn," went on our hero, tantalizingly. "Set your braves to singing their death-song before you start, though. We are just in the humor to kill off a few more redskins. We will save the soldiers the trouble when they start out to corral your band."

Crack!

The report of a rifle sounded and a bullet flattened against the face of the rocky cliff a foot above the top of the boulder Wild was crouching behind.

"That's the chief's answer," said Jim Dart. "You made him pretty mad, I guess, Wild."

The redskins were behind the trees on the slope less than a hundred yards away, but they dared not show themselves.

They had experienced quite enough in that one rush they had made.

Fifteen minutes slipped by without anything further happening.

Then a guttural "Ugh!" sounded through the darkness.

"What is it, redskin?" Wild asked, knowing right away that one of the Pawnees wanted to parley.

"Pawnees want to get their dead braves and bury," came from behind the trees.

"Well, you can't do it to-night. If you try it there will be a whole lot more to bury. Just wait till daylight, please."

The Pawnee did not say another word.

Another fifteen minutes of silence followed and then a small flame showed up something like a quarter of a mile away.

This rapidly grew in proportions till it was a regular bonfire.

"A signal!" exclaimed Young Wild West. "They are making a blaze to attract the attention of more Pawnees. Boys, it seems as though they mean us. I am going to take a little scout around and try and find out just how many of them there are and what they are up to."

Cherlic and Jim would have both been glad to go with him, but since he did not ask either of them they did not even hint it.

They knew that Young Wild West always knew his own business.

"Just keep a sharp watch while I am gone," he went on, as he buckled his belt tighter about his waist. "If I get into trouble you will know about it, for I will no doubt get in a shot or two before they get me. If I should get captured you will have to use your own judgment as to getting me away from them. Now, Et, you just take things easy and shoot the first redskin you lay eyes on! It is a case of war now, and we have either got to kill or be killed."

"I will, Wild. But be very careful, won't you?" was Arietta's reply.

"I am always careful."

"But sometimes you get into trouble, for all that."

"Well, I always manage to get out of it; that's one consolation."

Without any further talk Wild crept around a boulder and glided off toward the clump of trees the redskins had been lurking behind.

Twenty feet away from the camp he came upon the body of one of the Pawnees.

It was a grewsome object to come in contact with, but he was hardened to that sort of thing, and so did not mind it.

He came upon two more before he reached the trees, but he kept right on.

Wild was not sure but that there might be one or more of the redskins hiding in the timber to watch the camp, so he moved with the utmost caution.

Once among the trees he had to be careful lest a twig should crack under his weight.

It was as dark as a pocket under the trees, and this made it a hazardous undertaking.

Suddenly he became aware of the fact that there was at least one of the Pawnees there.

Something moved less than three feet ahead of him.

That it was a redskin he had not the least doubt.

There is no doubt that in all the human race there is no one who has a keener vision and sense of hearing than the North American Indian.

The Indian crouching in front of our hero knew of his presence at the very instant Wild became aware that there was a living being right before him.

Instead of yelling to let his comrades know that one of the palefaces was spying upon them, the redskin launched himself forward to grapple with the boy and make him a prisoner.

There is where he made a mistake.

Young Wild West was not the sort to be caught that way. His keen-edged hunting knife was in his hand just as the Indian sprang forward.

As the hands of the brave landed upon his head and shoulders Wild made a lunge.

The point of the blade struck the throat of the Pawnee.

There was a terrible force to it, since the copper-skinned foe met the blow.

There was a gurgling sound and our hero sprang back and allowed his assailant to drop gently to the ground.

"That was a narrow escape," he thought. "Well, it had to be done. It was his life or mine."

The daring boy straightened to his full height beside a tree and listened.

No sound could be heard.

"I guess he was here all alone," he murmured, under his breath. "Well, now for the spot where the bright fire is burning."

He took the chances of walking upright through the piece of timber and worked his way toward the fire.

He kept his knife in his right hand for work at close quarters and gripped a six-shooter with his left.

Noiselessly he walked along till he came to the edge of the pine timber.

There was an irregular piece of land covered with rocks, boulders and bushes ahead of him, and then he would have to descend into a gully and climb up the other side before he would be able to see what was taking place near the blazing fire.

Wild set out to get to the proper spot. There were no Indians to bother him in doing it.

The one who had gone under had been left in the little patch of pines to keep a watch on the camp of the palefaces, and now that he was out of the way, it was comparatively plain sailing for the young deadshot.

When he reached the gully he could no longer see the flames of the blazing fire, but he could see the glow from it.

Down in the gully he went, and the next minute he was climbing up the other side.

The fire had been built on a broad ledge of rock, and this was not more than fifty yards from the edge of the gully.

The bushes were thick between the ledge and where the boy was.

Unhesitatingly he pushed his way through them when he reached the level above.

The cracking of the burning brush and twigs would drown any slight noise that he might make.

Wild was fully aware of the danger he was running into, but that made no difference to him.

He was used to that sort of work.

Stealthily he made his way forward to the place he wanted to reach.

Once there he could see all that was taking place around the fire.

It did not take him much more than a second to count thirteen redskins there.

One was walking about with a rifle in the hollow of his arm and the others were squatted near the fire under an overhanging rock.

The signal fire was now dying out, but as he turned his eyes in the direction the redskins seemed to be gazing, Wild saw another fire.

It was at least two miles away.

Elk Horn, who had escaped the bullets of our friends when the assault on the camp was made, now arose to his feet, and with a guttural exclamation of satisfaction, started straight for the point where our hero was concealed.

CHAPTER III.

ARIETTA'S CAPTURE.

Young Wild West had not expected anything of this kind. It was only by chance that the Pawnee chief happened to walk toward him, but it was bound to result in the boy's discovery.

Wild did not get up and run.

He remained perfectly quiet, hoping that the chief would stop before he got to him or else turn in some other direction.

But, as luck would have it, he came right upon him!

Wild moved to get out of his way when it was too late.

Elk Horn stumbled over him and landed in a heap, letting out a yell of alarm as he did so.

Then our hero arose and started to run for it.

But the chief was too quick for him.

Reaching out his hand, he caught the daring young deadshot by the ankle and threw him heavily to the ground.

Young Wild West seldom made a mistake, but he had made one this time.

He should have taken the chances of moving out of the way and not depended upon the chief to stop or turn away.

As he fell to the ground he knew he was caught, so he swung his revolver around and fired at the redskins, who were now rushing upon him.

Crack! Crack!

He fired two shots and then he was seized by half a dozen hands and rendered powerless.

One of the Indians he had shot at received a bullet in his arm and the other had a tuft of feathers shot out of his hair.

Wild had no time to cover any of them in particular when he fired the shots.

He did it more to let his friends know that he was in trouble than anything else.

As the daring young deadshot was dragged into the light of the fire Elk Horn gave a grunt of satisfaction.

"Ugh! Young Wild West, the paleface brave!" he exclaimed, looking surprised and pleased, as well.

"You know me all right, you red scoundrel!" answered Wild, as calmly as though he was a visitor at the camp instead of a prisoner. "But I must say I don't know you."

"Big Chief Elk Horn see Young Wild West more than twenty months ago, when he was with the horse soldiers at the fort," said the chief, puffing his chest out with pride. "Elk Horn was living in peace with the palefaces then. He hear that Young Wild West heap much brave; shoot plenty Pawnees when they fight the soldiers. Elk Horn is glad to meet Young Wild West!"

The last was said with as much sarcasm as an Indian is capable of giving, and the actions of the speaker told how really glad he was.

The brave who had received the bullet wound in the arm stood near by scowling at the captive, while one of his companions was engaged in binding it up.

He acted very much as though he would like to put an end to the boy right then and there, and if it had not been for the chief it is quite likely he would have done so.

Wild was now standing on his feet with his hands bound to his sides, while two of the braves clutched him by the shoulders.

"What's the matter, redskin?" he asked, looking at the ugly, scowling, painted face. "Does your arm hurt? I'm mighty sorry I didn't land a bullet in your heart. That was one of the few times I fired without knowing exactly what I was shooting at. You ought to be smiling with delight instead of looking so ugly."

"Paleface boy will die by torture!" was the quick reply.

"Oh, I guess not. If you redskins don't let me go right away you will be sorry for it. You haven't got long to stay on the warpath, and you know it. The soldiers will soon be after you and then back to the reservation you will go, crying and weeping like a lot of old women. It isn't likely that many of you will get back, though, for you will be fools enough to put up a fight, and then your bones will be picked by the wolves."

"Paleface boy heap much talk!" exclaimed the brave, and, stepping up, he struck Wild a blow on the head with the hilt of his hunting-knife.

At this the chief turned about angrily and gave the wounded redskin a push that sent him reeling into the blazing fire.

One of the others caught him and pulled him out in time to save him from being burned.

Wild laughed loudly at this, and the rest of the Pawnees looked just a trifle surprised at him.

If there is anything that an Indian admires it is courage. Young Wild West was not only showing courage, but he was laughing outright while he was a captive in their hands.

Elk Horn merely nodded.

Evidently he knew considerable about the boy he had succeeded in capturing.

He turned to his followers and began talking rapidly in his own language.

Wild was not thoroughly acquainted with the Pawnee tongue, though he could both speak and understand the Sioux Indians.

But he gleaned enough from what the chief said to learn that they were going to leave the spot at once and meet the Indians they had put out the signal-fire for.

This was not pleasing to our hero.

Should the band of thirteen join a larger band his chances of getting away from them would be much harder.

The Indians did not talk long about it.

Two minutes later a pony was led up and Wild was lifted upon its back.

Then a rope was passed under the belly of the animal and his ankles were tied so he would have to remain there.

During this proceeding the boy did not show the least sign of anxiety, much less fear.

"So you are not going to allow me to go free, eh, Elk Horn?" he asked. "I guess you don't want that five hundred dollars you started in to get to-day."

"Elk Horn got more than five hundred dollars," was the reply. "He got all the money the palefaces got, and then Young Wild West will die at the stake. Big Chief Elk Horn has spoken."

"Oh, you have spoken, have you? All right! There is no use in saying anything more, then. Go ahead and carry out your programme."

Wild knew that Charlie and Jim must be somewhere near by this time, and he was in hopes that they would open fire on the red demons before they got away with him.

The braves mounted their ponies at the command of the chief and made ready to lead those who had been rendered riderless by our friends.

Elk Horn had just swung himself astride of the horse he rode, which was resplendent with gaudy trappings, when a startling thing happened.

"Whoop! Whoop!" rang out the voice of Cheyenne Charlie right near them.

Crack! Crack!

Two shots sounded and two of the braves tumbled from their horses.

Elk Horn did not wait to see any more.

Bending low to his horse's neck, he urged it forward at a gallop.

Crack! Crack!

Two more shots sounded, and as yet the redskins had not fired an answering shot.

Elk Horn, though a shy chief, was not as brave as he would make it appear.

He was going to get away from that spot as quickly as he could, because he knew that the palefaces would be apt to pick him off if they got the chance.

But in making his flight the chief got turned around a bit, and the first thing he knew he found himself heading straight for the camp of the palefaces.

As he reined in his horse to turn a female figure with a leveled rifle appeared before him.

It was Arietta!

Cheyenne Charlie and Jim Dart had hardly gone to the assistance of Wild than she made up her mind to go also and try and do something.

She had left the camp in charge of Anna, Eloise and the Chinaman.

Hearing the horse approaching on a dead run, she had halted to wait and see who it was.

Charlie and Jim had not taken their horses with them, so she wondered who it could be.

It never once occurred to her that one of the Pawnees was heading that way.

But when she saw the tufted head of the chief in the starlight she made ready to halt him and make a prisoner of him.

If she could do that she felt that they would have a chance to make an exchange, in case Wild failed to get away from the red demons.

"Get off that horse!" commanded the girl. "If you don't I will shoot you dead!"

"Ugh!" grunted the chief, and then he quickly obeyed. But he had no intentions of giving himself up, however.

He dismounted on the side of the horse opposite to the brave girl, and then, as quick as a flash, he dove under the animal and struck upward at her, knocking the rifle in the air just as it was discharged.

Arietta had meant to shoot him all right, but his trick had foiled her.

"Paleface maiden heap much smart!" said Elk Horn, as he caught the surprised girl and pinioned her arms by winding his powerful left arm about her.

Though she struggled violently and screamed for help, it was no use.

In much less time than it takes to write it down the Indian chief had flung his blanket over her head and twisted it about her body, making one of the peculiar knots that redskins are such adepts at.

Over the waiting horse Arietta was flung and then Elk Horn mounted behind her.

The blanket muffled her cries, and away she was carried, the steed going at a swift gallop.

As the chief rode past the burning fire on the ledge he let out a hoarse yell of defiance.

Arietta managed to loosen the blanket from her face sufficiently to make herself heard, and she shouted:

"The Pawnee chief has got me! Help! Oh, Wild!"

Then away through the darkness of the night Elk Horn rode in triumph.

He did not know for certain whether Young Wild West had escaped or not, but he was pretty well satisfied that he had.

Anyhow, he expected that the majority of his braves would reach the camp alive.

Elk Horn had quite a following at the camp on the shore of the lake.

There were nearly two hundred warriors and as many as fifty squaws, with twice that number of children there.

They had foolishly left the reservation and started on the warpath on account of some grievance they had with the Indian agent.

The Pawnee chief kept a firm hold on Arietta and galloped up to his headquarters without being interfered with or hearing any sounds of pursuit.

Elk Horn dismounted, and, calling two ugly-looking squaws, placed Arietta in their charge.

CHAPTER IV.

ARIETTA IS HELD FOR RANSOM.

Young Wild West's heart throbbled with joy when he heard the familiar war-cry of Cheyenne Charlie.

As the two shots were fired and the redskins scattered and rode from the spot he knew he was saved.

But the horse he was bound to was inclined to follow its mates, and if Jim Dart had been one second later in leaping forward Wild would have been borne from the spot, powerless to guide the pony.

But as it was, Jim managed to catch the bridle in time and pull the steed around.

Crack!

A bullet from one of the Pawnees whistled past his head. Swish—swish!

Two quick strokes of his knife and Wild was free.

It so happened that the brave who had charge of Wild's weapons was one of those that dropped when Charlie and Jim fired upon them.

There lay his belt with his shooters and knife in it right beside the dead redskin, while a few feet from it was his rifle.

Crack!

Crack!

It was Charlie who fired this time, and the brave who had sent a bullet at Jim received his dose of medicine.

Though their chief had left them, the redskins did not go very far away.

When they kept popping away Wild gave the word to get out of the light that was thrown out by the fire.

There was little use in trying to hit the redskins in the dark, so our hero decided to go back to the camp.

It was just at that moment that the clatter of hoofs reached their ears, and, looking down upon the level spot, they saw the outlines of the mounted Indian chief and his captive as they flitted by.

But they did not recognize them until the yell of defiance rang out, and Arietta gave her cry for help.

Young Wild West was thunderstruck when he realized that his sweetheart had been captured by Elk Horn.

"Boys," said he, "we must get back to the camp in a hurry. I am going to mount Spitfire and go after Arietta. How that copper-skinned hound got her in his clutches I can't imagine. But it makes no difference! She has got to be saved!"

Wild was down in the gully before the words were out of his mouth.

Cheyenne Charlie and Jim Dart were right behind him. They had no thoughts of chasing the redskins now; they were only eager to do all they could to help Wild save Arietta.

When they reached the camp they found Anna and Eloise in a state of excitement.

They had heard the defiant shout of the Indian chief and the scream of Arietta.

"Oh! Oh!" exclaimed Eloise, wringing her hands; "why did she go out of the camp, anyway? She said she was going to help Jim and Charlie save you, Wild, and now she is a captive herself!"

"But I will get her back soon enough, never fear," was the calm rejoinder. "I am going to follow that rascal of a chief right to his headquarters."

The daring boy was saddling the sorrel stallion as he spoke.

"What are we to do, Wild?" Jim asked.

"You are to stay right here till morning," was the quick reply: "If I am not back with Arietta by that time you will have to use your own judgment in looking for me."

That was enough.

It was not necessary for Wild to say any more.

He mounted his horse, and, waving adieu to them, rode off. Charlie and Jim were in anything but an easy frame of mind as the daring young Prince of the Saddle rode off on his mission.

"I reckon ther best way we kin spend ther balance of ther night is to strengthen our position here," observed the scout, after he had thought a while.

"Tellee me whatee do, Misler Charlie," said Hop Wah, stepping forward.

"All right. Get ther pick and shovel."

The Chinaman hastened to obey.

"Now," observed the scout, stepping over to the face of the cliff, "I noticed afore dark that there was a big rock here that looked as though it wouldn't take much to drop out of ther rocky bank. You jest git to work with that pick. If you kin loosen it so it will drop out there'll be a big hollow behind it, an' then we'll know for sartin that ther gals has a safe place to go to sleep."

Hop at once started in under the direction of Charlie, while Jim kept a watch.

The Chinaman was a good worker, providing he was not kept too long at it.

He went at it just as though he knew how.

But he did not have to work very long before there was a crashing of dirt.

Charlie grabbed him and lifted him bodily out of the way as a big rock weighing a couple of tons fell out of the face of the cliff and fell a distance of probably four feet to the ground.

Hop Wah had underrained it, and, just as the scout had thought, the rock had dropped down.

"My!" exclaimed Anna and Eloise in a breath. "What a narrow escape for Hop."

"Oh, I was watchin'," retorted Charlie. "I knowed what was likely to happen if he didn't. Now we'll see what kind of a place it is back of ther blamed rock."

He stepped around it and lighted a match, knowing that the light would not be seen by the redskins, even if they were watching them.

As the flickering flame of the match flared up a gasp of astonishment came from the scout.

The moving of the giant piece of rock had disclosed the mouth of a cave!

"Great ginlets!" he cried. "Lookee here, gals!"

Anna and Eloise hastened to his side just as the match went out.

But in that brief instant they had seen the cave.

Charlie hastily lighted another.

Then an opening in the cliff was disclosed that was not only large enough to accommodate the whole party, but their horses as well.

It was simply one of the freaks of nature.

The Rocky Mountains are full of caves and caverns, anyhow, and this one had been walled in by the big rock from natural causes.

It was so dry in the place that dust was flying in every direction.

"Hop," said Charlie, "fetch one of ther lanterns here an' then go an' relieve Jim a minute or two."

"Alee light," was the reply, and the celestial hastened to obey.

When the lantern was lighted Charlie and the girls took a good look at the strangely discovered cave.

It was rather oval in shape, but there was more than room for the tall form of the scout to stand erect.

The floor was an almost level piece of rock that was at least three feet lower than the ground outside.

"I reckon we could fetch ther horses in here if we was to dig a place for 'em to step down," observed Charlie. "This

is a mighty good place to stand a siege if it should come to that. Hello, Jim! What do you think of this?"

Dart had appeared at that moment, and he stood looking at the cave with an expression of amazement on his face. "Great Scott!" he exclaimed; "who would have thought there was a cave here?"

"Nobody," was the quick reply. "But I had an idea that big rock would drop out of ther face of ther cliff if it was underrained a little, though. I took notice when we first got here that it was loose all ther way across ther top of it."

"Well, I guess we had better clean up the place a bit and let the girls move in," said Jim, after a pause. "We will let the tents be where they are, so if the redskins do come around they will think we are fixed just the same as we were when they last saw us."

"Right you are, Jim! It are too bad that Arietta got caught by ther Pawness chief. If it wasn't for that we could make this our headquarters till some one come along an' give us a lift. It are likely that ther redskins won't let up on us till they're cleaned out by a troop of cavalry, or some one else. You stand guard an' I'll help Hop an' ther gals move ther things in here."

Before he left, however, Jim stepped down into the cave and walked around inside.

He satisfied himself that there was no danger of there being a cave-in and then came out.

When he found Hop peering carefully through the darkness on the alert for danger, he told him to go back and help the scout.

Jim stationed himself outside of the little breastworks they had made and prepared to put in a tedious time of it. Since the Pawnees had succeeded in making a prisoner of Arietta he hardly thought that they would be bothered again by them that night.

But there was no telling what might happen.

An hour passed by.

Charlie and the rest had moved everything of value into the cave and the girls were snugly ensconced there.

The scout had nothing else to do now, so he came out to keep the company of Jim.

The two talked along in low tones for several minutes.

Then they suddenly heard the pounding of a horse's hoofs. A horseman was coming toward the camp.

It did not take them two seconds to realize this.

"It's an Injun, I'll bet!" whispered the scout, as they drew back behind the cover of the rocks.

The horse slowed down a few seconds later and then stopped altogether.

Charlie and Jim knew the rider had halted in the little grove of pines on the right.

Presently a voice called out from that direction:

"Pawnee wants to talk to palefaces!"

"All right!" answered the scout; "go ahead an' talk."

"Elk Horn has the paleface maiden in his village, where he had two hundred braves."

"He has, hey?"

"Yes," answered the Indian, speaking very good English; "Elk Horn says if you send him five hundred dollars the paleface maiden shall be brought back to you."

"Well, you go back an' tell Elk Horn that we ain't got no five hundred dollars, an' that we wouldn't send it to him if we had it. Tell him if he don't send the gal back safe an' sound between now an' daylight somethin' will light on him an' his braves so quick an' hard that it'll make ther heads swim! Light out, now, you red galoot, or somethin' will happen to you!"

Not another word came from the Pawnee, but the next minute the hoofbeats of his horse could be heard as he rode back.

"They're holdin' Arietta for ransom, hey?" observed the scout. "An' they don't know that Wild's out lookin' for her! Well, that's all right."

CHAPTER V.

YOUNG WILD WEST AND LAUGHING LEAF.

Young Wild West was a persistent, relentless pursuer. He never gave up when he once took a trail.

He had not the least idea how far he would have to ride before he would overtake the Indian chief and Arietta, but he had an idea that it would not be any farther than the place where the answering signal-fire had shone from.

That was only about two miles away.

Wild let the sorrel go at a sharp canter, holding tight on

the reins so he could bring him to a halt at an instant's notice.

Both signal-fires had now died out, but the daring boy had the direction well in his mind, and he rode that way.

When he had covered about half a mile he found that he was riding close to the edge of the same stream that ran along by the camp.

"I mustn't make a mistake, and ride into the water, old boy," he said to his horse. "That would make too much of a floundering noise, and if there are any of the redskins about they would surely hear it. The chances are that the gang that had me have not all got away from the place where they had the fire burning on the ledge. They may take a notion to go back and attack our camp again, and if they do Charlie and Jim will have to do the best they can with them."

Two miles was a very short ride for the dashing young Prince of the Saddle.

He had just about covered that distance when he heard the barking of a dog some distance ahead of him.

Instantly he brought the sorrel stallion down to a walk. That the dog belonged to the camp of the redskins he had not the least doubt.

And the fact that there was a dog there taught him that he must expect to find a big force of the Pawnees there with their squaws and papposes.

It was evident that the entire number who had left the reservation to go on the warpath were there.

Wild allowed his horse to walk now, following close to the bank of the creek.

Precipitous cliffs and jagged rocks were on every hand, while vegetation was rather scarce.

As the boy rounded a little hill he came in sight of the Indian encampment.

It lay in a hollow right on the shore of a lake, the waters of which glistened in the starlight.

The creek emptied into the lake, which was one of the many similar bodies to be found in the higher altitudes of New Mexico.

In the rainy season the lakes were full and in the dry time of the year some of them dried up entirely.

Wild took a good view from the back of his horse.

There were about a dozen fires burning at the headquarters of the Pawnees, which easily assumed the aspect of a village.

Tepees and wigwags were scattered about among the rocks in irregular fashion.

The hungry dogs belonging to the redmen barked and whined and the hum of voices came to the boy's ears plainly.

Young Wild West dismounted and looked for a safe place to leave his horse.

He did not want to tie the animal, for fear he might be caught by the Pawnees, and then Spitfire would remain a captive until found by some one.

But the steed was well trained, and the mere fact of having the bridle-rein dropped over his head would cause him to stay within a very few yards of the place he was left at for a reasonable length of time.

Just as Wild had found a suitable place to leave him a rustic sounded near him, and the next moment the figure of an Indian girl appeared before him.

"So the young paleface has come?" she said questioningly. "I have been waiting for him."

Wild quickly recovered from his astonishment at the sudden appearance of the Indian maiden.

"Yes, I have come," he answered in a matter-of-fact way. "Did the Pawnee maiden know I was coming?"

"Yes. You are Young Wild West."

"That is just who I am!" exclaimed the boy, folding his arms and looking calmly at her, as she stepped up before him.

He knew that she had no hostile intentions; he could tell that at the first glance.

"I am Laughing Leaf," said the girl, speaking in the best of English.

"Well, Laughing Leaf, what do you want to tell me?"

"Laughing Leaf learned from the beautiful paleface maiden who is a captive in the hands of Elk Horn, the great chief of the Pawnees, that she expected Young Wild West to come and take her away from the Pawnees. She told Laughing Leaf that she loved you as the wild flowers love the sun at the peep of day. Then Laughing Leaf grew sad, for she remembered that she had once looked upon Young Wild West, the great paleface brave, when he was

at the reservation with the soldiers. He was very beautiful to her then and she never forgot him.

Wild shrugged his shoulders. He now understood that the Indian maiden was in love with him.

He could not just remember of having seen her before, but knew that he must have.

So many Indian maidens had come before his range of vision that he could not possibly remember them all.

But Laughing Leaf remembered him because she had fallen in love with him.

Wild did not exactly know what to say to the girl. After a pause he looked keenly at her and observed:

"You will help me to save the paleface maiden, won't you, Laughing Leaf?"

"Elk Horn is going to send a brave to your camp to tell you that the paleface maiden will be set free if you will pay him five hundred dollars," was the evasive rejoinder.

"Ah! The old scoundrel is holding her for a ransom, then?"

"Elk Heart is my father!" exclaimed the girl, throwing back her head; "he is a great chief."

"Ah! You don't like him to be called an old scoundrel, then? Well, I can't help it, Laughing Leaf; he should not carry off a white girl and hold her for a ransom, then. But he shall be paid! I will pay the Pawnees all that is coming to them. Never fear on that score."

"Young Wild West would kill Elk Horn?"

"That is about the size of it, Laughing Leaf. My hand is steady and my eye is straight. When I fire a shot the bullet always finds its mark. Elk Horn has stolen my sweet-heart from me, and he wants five hundred dollars to release her. He will hold her till he gets it, he thinks, but he will be paid for her release by me. His death will mean her release, Laughing Leaf!"

Our hero thought he might as well talk this way to her for he wanted to get her out of the notion of caring anything for him.

The girl remained in a deep study for the space of a minute.

Then she turned on her heel. "Young Wild West has spoken," was all she said, and then she swept around the angle of rock and disappeared.

"I suppose that means that I will have a herd of redskins after me in less than two minutes," Wild muttered. "Well, I will move away from here."

Taking his horse by the bridle, he began picking his way across the rugged slope toward a towering cliff.

Reaching it, he halted under the shadow of it and listened. The dashing young dead-shot was in a quandary.

If the Indian maiden betrayed his presence he surely would have no show of rescuing Arietta, and he was jeopardizing his own chances of getting away by staying there.

But he quickly came to the conclusion to stay there for a few minutes.

It would not take long for him to learn whether Laughing Leaf had told the redskins of his presence or not.

Five minutes slipped by.

Not a sound was heard that would indicate the least bit of excitement in the Indian encampment.

"I guess it is a good thing for me that the Pawnee girl liked me so well," our hero thought. "If she did not she would have surely had a dozen or more of the braves after me before this."

Another five minutes passed.

Then a footfall sounded near by.

"It is Laughing Leaf," said a low, musical voice. The next moment the maiden appeared before him.

"I have come to tell Young Wild West that I will help him to get his golden-haired sweetheart from the camp of Elk Horn," she went on to say, and as she spoke Wild could not help noticing there was a peculiar ring in her voice.

"Are you talking with a straight tongue?" he asked, holding his hand on the butt of his revolver.

"Does the young paleface brave doubt the words of one who loves him?" answered the girl.

"Well, I—"

The sentence was cut short, for at that moment four shadowy forms sprang out of the darkness and bore Young Wild West to the earth!

Laughing Leaf had proved herself a traitress, after all. Wild was quickly overpowered in spite of anything he could do.

The girl even helped to bind him.

But not a word did she have to say while it was being done.

The sorrel stallion had leaped away in the darkness the instant his master was attacked.

The intelligent steed had been trained to this, for Wild never wanted his horse to be taken, even if he was himself. Spitfire would not go far, however.

He had a peculiar liking for Wild similar to that which a faithful dog has for its master.

"Thank you for the trick you played upon me, Laughing Leaf," said Wild, in bitter sarcasm, when he had fully recovered from his chagrin and surprise.

The Pawnee maiden did not reply.

The Indian girl said something in her own language to the four braves and they picked up Wild and carried him bodily from the spot.

Down toward the glistening waters of the lake they made their way, and finally paused on a ledge that hung some twenty feet above the mouth of the creek that emptied in the lake.

Just then the moon came up, and by its silvery light Wild could see that the bluff along the lake front and creek was very cavernous.

Laughing Leaf soon started ahead with stately tread, and half a minute later Young Wild West found himself in the darkness of a cave.

He was placed on the stony floor in a recess of which the Indian maid seemed to well know the existence of, and then at a word from her one of the redskins hurriedly left the place.

The other three sat down near him, while Laughing Leaf walked back to the mouth of the cave and stood there.

In a few minutes the brave sent out by her came back.

He had with him a buffalo skin and a blanket.

This was placed on the ground in the niche and Wild was rolled over upon it.

Then a boulder was worked up against the opening, so he was almost completely walled in.

"Young Wild West will forget his love for the golden-haired girl before he gets out to look at the blue sky again," said the Pawnee maiden meaningly.

"No, I won't!" was the quick reply. "And I won't forget to pay the Pawnees, either."

"When the brave Young Wild West forgets about the paleface maiden he will soon learn to love Laughing Leaf," resumed the girl, not paying the least attention to what he said.

"You just keep right on thinking that way, you vixen!" cried our hero angrily. "If you love me as much as you say you do you wouldn't have played me false like you have."

"Good-night, Young Wild West! You must sleep and dream of Laughing Leaf to-night. Good-night!"

With that she tripped away, followed by the four braves who had done her bidding.

CHAPTER VI.

ARIETTA IN GREAT PERIL.

Arietta was treated with the utmost respect by the two squaws placed in charge of her.

The teepee that she was taken to was wonderfully clean, so she did not have such an awful horror of remaining there a while.

One of the squaws could understand and speak English fairly well, and as she was rather talkative, Arietta soon learned from her that the young paleface brave Elk Horn had caught was rescued by his friends just before the chief had caught her.

This meant that her daring young lover was free.

Arietta felt better when she learned this.

That Wild would never rest until he got her away from the redskins she well knew.

The squaws were kind enough to leave the flap of the tent open so the light from the fire that was blazing near by came into the teepee.

During the first hour of her imprisonment in the teepee many of the Indians came along and took a peep at Arietta. Braves, squaws and children took advantage of the free show and looked wonderingly at the girl.

They had lived in peace with the palefaces for so many moons that it seemed strangely out of place to the majority of them to see the paleface maiden in the teepee with her hands tied behind her back.

But it soon got noised around the camp that Elk Horn

was going to make her friends pay five hundred dollars for her release.

Elk Horn needed some money to buy firearms and ammunition, so it was said.

Arietta soon learned this from the talkative squaw and she could not help smiling.

She knew that Young Wild West would not think of paying a ransom for her unless all other means of getting her away from her captors failed.

Arietta thought she had better try and see if she could not get the consent of her captors to have her hands free.

She turned to the squaw, who liked to talk so, and said: "You are a very nice squaw, I think. What is your name?"

"Sleepy Doe is my name in your tongue," was the reply.

"Well, Sleepy Doe, don't you think it rather hard on me to keep my hands tied this way? Are the Pawnees afraid that I would get out of the teepee and kill them all? They must be, or they would not keep me tied this way."

Sleepy Doe shook her head.

"Pawnees no 'traid paleface maiden get away," she answered. "Me go tell chief; he maybe let her have hands free."

"Thank you," said Arietta, smiling at her just as though she was simply trying to get her to do a commonplace thing for her.

Sleepy Doe left the teepee, but the other squaw remained. The latter was one of the wrinkled-visaged, scowling sort, and it was evident that she did not have very kindly feelings toward the captive girl.

Sleepy Doe, on the other hand, was fairly good looking, with what might be taken for a kindly look in her dark eyes when she turned them upon the captive.

The squaw in the teepee gave a grunt of disgust when her companion went out.

Then she lighted a black-looking pipe and began puffing tobacco smoke in the face of Arietta.

"You should be ashamed of yourself for smoking a pipe," said the brave girl, looking at the ugly-faced squaw as though she would like to knock the pipe from her mouth.

"Ugh!" was the grunting reply. "Paleface maiden better shut up!"

Then she blew more of the stifling smoke at the captive. Arietta did not like this.

She did not mind seeing a man smoke a pipe, so long as he did not try to annoy her with the smoke; but when it came to an ugly Indian squaw trying to irritate her by blowing smoke at her, she drew the line.

She made up her mind that if she succeeded in getting her hands free the pipe would not be smoked in the teepee very long.

Just then Sleepy Doe came back, followed by one of the braves, who was doing guard outside the teepee.

"Elk Horn says the paleface maiden can have her hands free," said the young squaw.

Then the brave took his knife, and kneeling before her, cut the bonds.

"Thank you!" exclaimed Arietta coolly. "I feel better now."

The Indian went out and Sleepy Doe sat down on a folded skin.

The other squaw scowled more than ever at the fair captive and smoked away in silence.

"Sleepy Doe," said Arietta, "I don't like that smoke; it chokes me."

Sleepy Doe said something in her own tongue to the old squaw.

With an exclamation of anger she leaned over and blew a cloud of smoke in Arietta's face.

Whack!

The brave girl struck the pipe from her hand and it went spinning out of the teepee.

Smack!

She let her hand go again and slapped the face of the ugly squaw, sending her over backward.

"If I am being held for ransom I guess I am going to be treated half decent," said the brave girl, standing ready to defend herself in case the squaw looked for satisfaction.

But the guard outside heard the rumpus, and he came in and seized the old squaw in a jiffy.

Sleepy Doe said something to him, and the result was that Arietta's tormentor was hustled outside in a hurry.

Sleepy Doe looked at the fair captive and smiled.

"The paleface maiden is heap much brave," she said.

"Yes," was the reply, "brave enough to knock the pipe out of that dirty squaw's mouth. She was doing her best to annoy me, and I made up my mind that I would not stand it."

"Sleepy Doe will stay in the teepee with the paleface maiden; the braves will guard the outside, while she watches her charge inside."

"Well, you are a nice squaw, Sleepy Doe. I don't object to your company in the least. You should not be here with the bad Pawnees, Sleepy Doe. It is no place for you. By and by the soldiers will come. Then there will be a big fight, and the Pawnees will be beaten and marched back to the fort as prisoners. You will be sorry then."

The young squaw shook her head.

"My lover is a young chief of the Pawnees; he is thought much of by Elk Horn. I must stay by my lover," she said.

"Well, I don't blame you for staying with your lover. But you are both wrong—all the Pawnees who have left the reservation and put on their warpaint are wrong."

"The paleface maiden speaks wisely. But what is her name? I must call her by it."

"Arietta is my name."

"It is a very pretty name."

"Thank you for the compliment," said Arietta, with a smile.

"What is the name of her young lover, who is such a great brave?" questioned the squaw.

"Young Wild West is his name."

"Ah! I heard Laughing Leaf, the beautiful daughter of Elk Horn, speak of him when I went to ask the chief if Arietta could have her hands free. Laughing Leaf loves Young Wild West; Sleepy Doe could tell that by the light that was in her eyes when she spoke his name."

Arietta's blue eyes kindled in the light of the blazing fire that shed its glow in the teepee.

"It will do her no good if she does love him!" she exclaimed.

"But it may do him good," said Sleepy Doe, looking wise.

"How so?"

"Elk Horn promised his daughter that no harm should come to Young Wild West if he got caught by the Pawnees, and that she should have him for her husband."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Arietta.

But it was an affected laugh, for all that.

The girl could not help feeling jealous of the Indian maiden, even though she was absolutely certain that Wild cared no more for her than he did for the ugliest-looking squaw in the camp.

It is the female nature to get jealous under such conditions.

Arietta had never seen Laughing Leaf, but she felt that she almost hated her for having such feelings toward her dashing young lover.

Sleepy Doe was not slow to understand the situation.

"Young Wild West would not take the chief's daughter for his bride, not if it was to save his life!" she said. "He is a great brave, and he would not do as the Pawnees want him; he has shot and killed some of them, and he hates their whole race. He would never marry a Pawnee."

"You bet he wouldn't!" exclaimed Arietta, her eyes flashing. "and I'd like to see the one who would try to force him to!"

"Well, Arietta can lie down and sleep now. She knows that she will not be harmed, and she knows that Young Wild West is to be spared if he is caught by the Pawnees. She has nothing to worry about."

"I guess you are right, Sleepy Doe. I may as well get some sleep, for there is no telling what might happen between now and daylight. Rest is something that gives a person strength, and it strikes me just now that I need to keep strong."

"Good-night, Arietta!"

"Good-night, Sleepy Doe."

Arietta threw herself on the soft couch that the skins and blankets made, and felt that she was perfectly safe to go asleep.

She knew that Sleepy Doe would not see her harmed.

But it was not an easy thing for her to get asleep just then.

She lay there awake for nearly an hour, and then, just as she was dropping off into a doze, she became conscious that some one was entering the teepee.

The girl instantly assumed an upright position.

Before her stood a Pawnee maiden of about her own age. Arietta did not need to be told who it was.

She knew it was Laughing Leaf! Sleepy Doe sat dozing and she did not see the maiden until Arietta arose.

"Laughing Leaf!" the squaw exclaimed.

"Yes, it is Laughing Leaf," was the reply. "She has come to look upon the paleface maiden and smile at her faded hair and sky-colored eyes. She wants to find out just how beautiful she is!"

This was said mockingly, and Arietta flashed a scornful glance at her in return for the words.

The brave girl remained silent for a moment and then said:

"Well, have you looked at me enough?"

"Yes," was the reply.

"Well, leave the teepee, then!"

"I am the daughter of Elk Horn; I can come and go when I please. If I say kill the paleface girl it will be done. Elk Horn would give up the five hundred dollars he wants for the return of the paleface girl if his daughter says so."

The look in the dark, flashing eyes of the Pawnee girl told plainly that she meant what she said.

Arietta realized that she had a dangerous enemy in her. Laughing Leaf allowed her hand to slip to the belt that was about her waist and her fingers clutched the handle of a hunting-knife.

There was no doubt but that it would have taken very little to make her plunge the blade into the heart of the fair white girl.

"Listen!" she said in a whisper that went to the ears of Arietta like a hiss. "You have one chance to live! Shall I tell you what it is?"

"Tell me," was the reply, in as calm a tone as the girl could speak just then.

"If you would live you must give up the idea of ever seeing Young Wild West again."

Arietta shook her head.

"I will die, then!" she said coolly.

"But you will not die until you have seen and spoken to him!" whispered the Pawnee maiden, as a new thought seemed to strike her. "Yes, you shall see him first, and you shall tell him with your own lips that he must never expect to see you alive again! You must tell Young Wild West that he is for Laughing Leaf, and not for you."

"You have arranged it very nice, haven't you?" Arietta answered sneeringly.

"Laughing Leaf has spoken!"

With that the copper-hued beauty turned and left the teepee.

From thinking, Arietta fell to musing, and then a drowsy feeling came over her.

Pretty soon she was asleep.

The dawn was just about breaking in the morning when two braves stepped noiselessly into the teepee.

Two more peered in.

Arietta awoke, but before she could utter a scream she was seized and carried from the teepee, a rough hand being held over her mouth to stifle her cries!

CHAPTER VII.

WILD'S DESPERATE FIGHT.

It was certainly a miserable night that Young Wild West put in at the cave.

The things that he was bound with rendered him absolutely helpless, and after he had tried several times to get his hands free he gave it up.

Then he tried to roll against the boulder that blocked the entrance to the little alcove, but it was useless.

He was a prisoner, and a safe one, too, apparently.

And it was all through the doings of the Pawnee maiden who loved him!

Usually Wild got out of such scrapes in short order, but this one was entirely different from the rest.

He had told Charlie and Jim to remain at the camp until morning, and then if he had not returned they were to use their own judgment.

That made it plain to him that he must simply grin and bear it until morning, anyhow.

So after a while he managed to get asleep.

He awoke two or three times, and each time he strove to break his bonds.

But the result was the same.

When the first light of the early morning finally came

into the cave Wild, who had been sleeping for about an hour, awoke at the sound of footsteps.

Instantly he was wide awake.

He knew the footfalls.

It was Laughing Leaf who was coming into the cave.

"There is only one thing for me to do, and that is to deceive the girl," he thought. "I must tell her that I will do just as she wants me to, I suppose. The situation demands it, for Arietta must be saved!"

The next minute he saw the shining eyes of the Pawnee maiden peering at him over the top of the boulder.

"It is too bad that the brave young paleface should lie here all night," she said soothingly.

"Do you think so, Laughing Leaf?" he asked.

"Yes, Laughing Leaf feels sorry for him."

"Then why did you leave me here?"

"Because I would not lose you. I will never let you leave me again!"

"All right, Laughing Leaf. If that is the case I suppose I will have to stay by you always."

The girl seemed to be pleased at this.

"Has Young Wild West thought of Laughing Leaf since she left him last night?"

"I have thought more of you than of any other person living."

This was indeed the truth, but not in the way she meant. However, if Wild could make her think it was that way he felt that he was justified in doing so.

"You have thought of the paleface maiden with the golden hair, too?" she asked, in a low whisper.

"Yes, but not as much as I have of you, Laughing Leaf."

The Pawnee maiden's eyes lit up with joy.

Then she stepped back and called out something in her own tongue.

The next minute two Indian braves stepped over from the entrance to the cave and rolled the boulder away from the alcove.

At a word from the girl they dragged our hero out.

Then she knelt and severed the thongs that bound his ankles together.

Wild felt a thrill go through him.

He thought she was going to set his hands free, too.

But he was mistaken.

She was not going to do anything like that just yet.

"Young Wild West," said she, "would you tell the paleface maiden that you thought more of Laughing Leaf all the night than you did of her?"

"If I told the truth I would surely have to tell her so," he answered, wondering what she was driving at.

It was now light enough for him to see pretty well.

The two braves stood before him, one with a drawn tomahawk, ready to dash out his brains with it, should the chief's daughter give the command.

The other Indian was no doubt a young chief, by the looks of his head-dress.

He did not seem to be so interested in watching Wild as the other, but watched the movements of Laughing Leaf in a way that told plainly that he was interested deeply in her.

It did not take our hero two minutes to figure it out that the young chief was in love with the girl.

Laughing Leaf now moved around a flitting part of the cave and was lost to view.

The next minute she came back, and following her were two more redskins carrying the form of Arietta.

Young Wild West gave a start.

He had not expected that his sweetheart was so close.

A blanket was wound about the girl's body, but a portion of her head and face was visible, and her dashing young lover recognized her instantly.

Arietta was gagged and her arms were tied behind her. But she was perfectly conscious, and when her eyes rested on her lover a happy light shone in them.

"Keep up your courage, Et," he said.

With her own hands Laughing Leaf removed the gag from the captive girl's mouth.

"Here she is, Young Wild West!" she cried dramatically. "Now tell her that you love me and never want to see her again!"

Arietta turned deathly pale.

A strange feeling crept over her, and for the space of a few seconds she thought she was on the threshold of death.

Wild calmed himself by a great effort.

"Laughing Leaf," he said, forcing a smile that was meant to be for her especial benefit, "would it not be right for you to leave me to talk to the girl alone a few minutes?"

She looked at him in a puzzled way before answering.

But he never once took his eyes from hers.

"The paleface brave knows what is best," she finally said. "He shall talk to the paleface girl with the faded hair."

A motion from her caused the four redskins to move to the entrance of the cave.

Then she turned to Wild and exclaimed:

"I will walk five hundred steps along the creek's bank and then come back. In that time you must have said your last words to the paleface maiden you will never see again. I am the chief's daughter, and I have spoken!"

Wild nodded approvingly, and then she swept out of the cave with the air of a conquering queen.

The moment she was gone our hero looked at his sweetheart and said in a hurried whisper:

"Pick up that knife with your teeth, Et!"

Laughing Leaf had forgotten to put the knife she had used to sever the bonds that held the boy's ankles together back in her belt, and it lay on the ground partly covered by them.

Arietta knew what was required of her instantly.

Down she went upon her knees, and by an extraordinary effort she got the back of the blade between her teeth.

"Cut my hands loose, Et. We will beat them yet!" he whispered encouragingly. "That Indian girl is worse than a she tiger-cat, but we'll get the best of her, see if we don't!"

He squatted on his haunches and turned to give the brave girl a chance.

Arietta never answered, but the look in her eyes told that she was working for life or death.

Calculating herself, she leaned forward and pressed the keen edge of the knife against the tough thongs.

Then she worked her head from side to side and the blade took hold.

Zip!

Wild was tugging, and when the strands gave way with a snap a low cry of joy came from his lips.

But at that very instant one of the redskins looked around and saw what had taken place.

With a cry of warning on his lips, he raised his tomahawk and sprang upon our hero.

The blade fell from Arietta's mouth as she opened it to utter a cry of dismay.

Whack! Young Wild West's right fist went out and the redskin fell in a heap to the ground.

Then catching his sweetheart about the waist, he made a dash out of the cave into the open air.

It was now broad daylight, but notwithstanding this he managed to get past the other Indians.

Wild's wrists were numb from being tied together so long and he did not have the full use of his hands yet.

But he determined to put up a fight.

Wild had just succeeded in dragging the helpless form of Arietta from the cave when the four Indians rushed from behind the rocks.

With the quickness of a tiger he sent one whirling over the cliff.

"Back, you red hounds!" he cried.

The brave boy was now himself again.

The blood was circulating through his body and he had the strength of a young lion.

The young chief sprang upon him to take him a prisoner, when the boy lowered his head and butted him in the stomach.

Then by a deft movement he seized the tomahawk that was in the next nearest brave's hands and wrenched it from him.

Whack! Whack!

Young Wild West struck hard and with the greatest of accuracy.

Down went two of them.

The remaining one pulled a revolver from his belt and leveled it at the dashing young deadshot.

But before he could pull the trigger Wild let the tomahawk go with all his strength.

Thud!

The weapon struck him between the eyes and his life went out like the snuff of a candle.

"I guess I wound those four fellows up pretty quick, Et," observed the boy coolly, as he picked up one of the redskins' knives and quickly liberated his sweetheart. "Now, then, let's arm ourselves and get away from here."

"Oh, Wild!" exclaimed Arietta joyously; "I am so glad!" The weapons of the redskins were soon in their possession. But just as they were about to leave the ledge that overlooked the creek and lake below, Laughing Leaf appeared from behind an angle of rock.

The Pawnee maiden was dumfounded when she saw her two captives standing there.

"I guess we know who is boss now, you black-eyed witch!" exclaimed Arietta. "Don't you come too close to me, or I'll shoot you!"

For just about a second Laughing Leaf stood stock still. Then she placed her fingers to her mouth and let out a cry that echoed among the surrounding hills and dashed around the bend of rock.

"Come, Et!" said Wild. "I am afraid we stand little chance to get away, but we can try. Oh! if I only had Spitfire now!"

Holding fast to the brave girl's hand, he ran for the spot where he had last seen his faithful horse the night before.

But when he reached it he found Spitfire was not there, which was all he could expect.

If the sorrel had remained there very long he would have been in the hands of the Pawnees now.

Again the warning cry of the defeated Pawnee maiden rang out on the still morning air.

This time it was answered by a score or more of the braves at the camp, which was only a short distance away.

"Et," said Wild, "we must hide. It is our only chance." Around a hillock they ran and headed for the creek.

As luck would have it, they found a place where the rain had made a gully down the bank, and they did not hesitate to slide down to the strip of white sand that was below.

As above, there were plenty of cavernous openings in the face of the cliff.

There was no time to make an examination of which was the best, so Wild hurried his sweetheart into the first one he saw that was large enough to permit the pair of them to enter.

The opening was so small that but little light got into the cave, and they could not tell just how large it was.

But Wild was looking for a place to hide, hoping to throw the redskins off their track.

Back into a recess of the cave they went.

They could hear the yells of the Pawnees faintly, but they both knew that it would only be a question of a very short time before they would be closer to their hiding-place.

"Well, Et," said the dashing young deadshot, "we can shoot them down if they come in here, as long as our ammunition lasts, anyhow. We—"

At that moment a fierce growl sounded within a few feet of them.

Young Wild West and Arietta had entered a bear's den!

CHAPTER VIII.

CHARLIE AND JIM AT WORK.

As the hours flitted by and Wild did not come back, Chayenne Charlie and Jim Dart grew all the more anxious concerning him.

They did not know just how far he would have to follow the Pawnee chief before he overtook him, but they felt pretty sure that it would be no farther than the place where the answering fire signal had appeared.

That being the case, there was only one conclusion to arrive at, and that was that the daring young deadshot had been captured.

The two longed for daylight to come.

Still, there was a possible chance that Wild was simply in hiding close to the Indian camp waiting for a chance to rescue Arietta.

When the first signs of day showed themselves in the eastern sky Charlie told Hop Wah to hurry up and get some coffee made.

"We'll take a ride over that way an' look for Wild an' Arietta," he said. "I reckon we'll be able to find 'em all right."

The last part of his remarks was intended to allay the fears of Anna and Eloise, who were very much worried.

The Chinaman worked like a beaver.

The fire was no sooner started than the coffee was over it. Then he got some venison steaks ready, so he could broil them as soon as the blaze and smoke was gone.

In fifteen minutes from the time he had started the fire the breakfast was ready for Charlie and Jim.

It was now light enough to distinguish objects at quite a distance, and, hurriedly swallowing their food, the two washed it down with coffee and then made ready to start on their quest.

"Hop," said the scout, looking at the celestial before he mounted his horse, "I want you to be on the lookout all the time we are gone. I think the best thing you can do is to take down the tents and get everything inside the cave, so in case any of the redskins happen along this way they will think we have left the place. You got at it right away before it gets too light."

"Allee right, Mister Charlie. Me cookee meatee to eatee allee day; then havee no fire to make."

"That's a good idea, Hop," said Jim, as he slung himself into the saddle.

Charlie mounted, and, waving their hands to Anna and Eloise, they rode away.

It was easy enough for the two to follow the trail made by Wild.

They were glad to find that there were so many rocks, crags and little hills to afford them riding-places in case any Indians might happen to show up.

They did not ride at a very swift pace, but it does not take long to cover a couple of miles, anyhow, and they were soon in sight of several columns of smoke, which told them plainly that they were getting close to the camp of the Pawnees.

"I reckon there's a lot of 'em, Jim," said the scout, as he reined in his horse and looked at the smoke. "There's jist about seven fires blazin' there now, an' it's a little too early for their general run of Injuns to start their fires to cook their breakfast. You kin bet that they've got their squaws, papooses an' their whole blamed outfit with 'em."

"Yes, it looks that way, Charlie," answered Dart, shaking his head. "I guess we'll have a hard time of it. There's no question in my mind but that Wild has got caught." Just then the whinny of a horse sounded close by.

The next minute a riderless horse came trotting around a clump of studded oaks.

It was Spitfire, Young Wild West's sorrel stallion.

"There!" exclaimed the scout; "that settles it! Wild has got caught. Come here, Spitfire."

He rode forward to meet the horse, which seemed to know him.

But it is quite likely that the intelligent steed knew their horses, too.

"Well, old fellow, I guess you can go along with us," said Jim, as he patted him on his glossy neck. "You will be handy to fetch Wild and Arietta away from the Pawnee camp, perhaps."

A couple of minutes later they set out, taking a direction off to the left of the place where the columns of smoke were arising.

Charlie and Jim were not yet near enough to see that the Indian encampment was located on the shore of a lake, and they were proceeding around so they would approach it from the side opposite the lake.

They covered perhaps two miles in making the circle, since there was a broad open space where they might easily be seen by the sharp-sighted redskins.

The sun was well up now, and the slanting rays shot over the hilly country and tinged the water in the creek and lake with streaks of gold.

Charlie and Jim caught sight of the lake when they reached a slight elevation, and then they could see the camp of the Pawnees.

"There's a lot of 'em, jost as I said," observed the scout, with a shrug of his shoulders. "Jim, I reckon it's strategy what we've got to use in this here case."

"Well, let's ride around to that little clump of timber on the left of the camp," answered Dart. "It is too bad Wild told us to wait till morning before using our own judgment."

"Yes, I reckon that's where he made a mistake. We might have been able to do a whole lot in ther dark. But it is light now, and we've got to be mighty careful."

They rode along, taking care to keep well out of the sight of the redskins, and finally reached the timber, which was less than a quarter of a mile from the outskirts of the Pawnee camp.

It was right on the shore of the lake, too, and Charlie and Jim thought there might be an advantage in this.

They rode through the timber until close to the edge and then they dismounted and Jim climbed a tree.

He could see pretty well through the camp, but of course could not tell whether the numerous teepees contained prisoners or not.

But he satisfied himself that Wild and Arietta were not to be seen, anyhow, and then he started to go down.

Just as he did so he saw a solitary Indian leading a horse along the shore of the lake and acting rather suspicious.

"That redskin acts as though he was trying to get away from the camp without being seen. He is heading right this way, so I guess we had better stop him and get some information."

"What's ther matter, Jim?" asked the scout, when he saw the boy coming down so rapidly.

"There's a redskin leading a horse right for the timber," was the reply. "Looks to me as though he is sneaking away from the camp."

"Is that so? Did you see any signs of Wild or Arietta?"

"Not a sign."

"That's queer, ain't it?"

"Well, I don't know. They may be in one of the teepees, you know."

"That's so. I reckon I'll try an' have a look at ther Injun what's comin'."

"You ought to be able to see him from here," answered Jim, as his feet struck the ground. "There! See him! My! but he is certainly sneaking away from his gang."

Charlie caught sight of the redskin now.

He was leading a pony right along the edge of a strip of sand at the edge of the water.

The chances were in his favor if he really was trying to get away without being observed by the Indians at the camp.

"He's a Pawnee, all right," observed Charlie. "Funny why he's sneakin' away like that."

"Well, he'll be here in a minute or two. Then we'll soon find out what he's up to," answered Dart.

Leaving their horses standing under cover of the trees, they made their way to the shore to intercept the redskin.

He was now within a hundred yards and still using every precaution to keep from being seen.

It was plainly his intention to place the timber between him and the camp and then mount and ride off.

Not suspecting that he was running right into the hands of two paleface enemies, the redskin came on.

He was within ten feet of where they were hiding behind a rock when Cheyenne Charlie arose and covered him with his revolver.

"Stop right where you are, redskin!" he exclaimed. "Don't make a yell, or you'll turn up your toes in a hurry!"

"Ugh!" grunted the astonished Pawnee, and then as our two friends took a good look at him they saw that he had been in the water.

"Where are you goin'?" asked the scout.

"Me go back to reservation; me no want to stay with Elk Horn and his braves."

"Oh, you've made up your mind to be good, hey?"

"Yes."

"Well, I reckon you kin stop here a little while with us, then. If you've made up your mind to be real good you might be able to help us out a little. We want ther two prisoners ther Pawnees has got, an' we ain't goin' to pay no five hundred dollars to git ther gal, either."

"You come to look for Young Wild West?" and the face of the Pawnee lighted up.

"That's jest who we come to look for, redskin."

"Young Wild West and paleface maiden over there," and he pointed to the cliff the other side of the Indian camp.

"Young Wild West make heap much fight; throw Injun down in water. Me swim out and watch. The young paleface brave kill three Pawnees, and then Laughing Leaf, Elk Horn's daughter, come and run away and call to braves. Pawnees come as thick as leaves and Young Wild West and paleface maiden hide somewhere. Then me come down by camp and take horse and gun and start for reservation. No want to stay with bad Pawnees; Elk Horn kill me for helping Laughing Leaf steal paleface maiden from camp."

"Ah!" exclaimed Jim; "now I see why you are trying to get away from the rest of the gang. You are afraid the chief will have you put to death for helping steal the girl captive away from the camp, eh? Well, you were doing a good turn for us if you helped get her away from the camp. The chief's daughter wanted to save her, then?"

"No!" and the Indian, who was no other than the fellow Wild had sent over the cliff when the four rushed out of the cave and attacked him shook his head. "Laughing Leaf no want to save girl; she want to kill her. She make love to Young Wild West, and then she go to kill paleface maiden so Young Wild West take Laughing Leaf for his squaw."

"Great gimlets!" cried the scout. "I reckon Arietta is up ag'in a double game."

Both he and Jim could see through it now.

They questioned the redskin, and he told them all he knew about the plot Laughing Leaf had laid.

He also told them that the young chief who was in love with the Pawnee maiden had been killed by a tomahawk in the hands of our hero.

He said his name was Firewater Jack, and that when he fell into the waters of the creek he was not injured.

He had crawled out and got behind a pile of rocks and witnessed what followed.

Then, after nearly an hour of waiting, he had managed to steal the pony and gun from the camp and strike out.

"Young Wild West heap much smart," he added. "Pawnees no find him when me come away."

"I reckon that's a putty straight story," remarked Charlie, when he was through questioning him. "Now, Firewater Jack, if you want to do ther right thing you'll help us find Young Wild West and his gal."

"Firewater Jack want to get back to reservation; he tell soldiers where Elk Horn is; then soldiers come and make Pawnees surrender. Nothing done to Firewater Jack because he good Injun."

"It is quite a scheme you have got for escaping being punished," said Jim. "But I guess you'll help us a little before you go."

"Firewater Jack no want to make palefaces mad," retorted the redskin.

"All right. Then you do just as we say, and your chances of getting off without being punished will be all the better."

"What you want me do?"

"We want you to go to the camp. Keep away from Elk Horn and Laughing Leaf. Don't let them see you at all. Then just find out if they have captured Young Wild West and the girl. Now, go on! Leave your pony here with us. You will be all right. It isn't likely the chief's daughter will tell that you helped her in her foul scheme. If Young Wild West downed the three who were with you, it is most likely the chief will think that they were all that had anything to do with the scheme. I'll bet that Laughing Leaf will not let her father know that she had anything to do with it, anyhow. You'll be safe enough, Firewater Jack."

"But don't you change your mind about bein' a good Injun, an' tell ther red galoots that we're out here waitin' to be caught," added Charlie, who could never bring himself to trust an Indian.

Firewater Jack drew his form up to its full height.

"My tongue is not crooked," he said. "I will do what I tell the palefaces I will. I will go to the camp and find out what they want to know."

He did not linger half a minute after that, but began sneaking toward the camp.

Then Charlie and Jim sat down and waited.

CHAPTER IX.

ARIETTA IS AGAIN CAPTURED.

Young Wild West was taken aback when he found they had crept into a bear's den in their efforts to elude the Pawnees.

It would not do to shoot, as the report would be heard and then they would quickly be discovered.

The boy drew his knife just as the lumbering form of a big black bear loomed up through the darkness of the cave.

What he did would have to be done quickly, and no one knew this any better than he did.

He did not wait for the bear to attack him, but darted forward like a shot.

A swift downward stroke of the knife and it was embedded to the hilt in the creature's left side.

Wild sprang back, narrowly escaping a blow from the bear's paw as he did so.

The animal staggered toward them and then sank down. The point of the knife had found its heart.

A scurrying, whining noise at her feet told Arietta that the bear's young were there in the cave.

She looked down and was able to discern the forms of three or four cubs that could not have been more than a month old.

Wild saw them also, and he quickly kicked them out of the way.

"They are harmless," he whispered. "Now, then, if there are no more big ones in here we are safe. A bear's den is a fine place to hide in, Et!"

They listened, but could hear nothing that would indicate the approach of the searching Indians.

The bear soon gave up the ghost and then Wild got his knife and wiped it on the fur coat of the bear.

"I might need this again," he remarked.

"You took an awful risk, Wild," said Arietta, with a shudder. "You sprang right at the bear, and one blow of its paw would have knocked you down. Then I would have been compelled to shoot and the Pawnees would have been here in no time."

"Well, risks are things that have to be taken quite often," Wild replied. "But since I got the best of the bear so easy, I am very glad we came in here. The redskins won't think we are in a bear's den."

They crouched in a dark corner and waited.

Pretty soon they heard the sounds of shouting near at hand.

The redskins were coming that way.

The cubs were gathered about the slain carcass of the old bear and were whining and scratching as though to bring her to life.

Wild was keeping his eyes on the light that came in from the entrance to the cave.

The opening was around a corner, so he could not see outside from where they were, but when he suddenly noticed a dark shadow there he knew the Indians were coming into the cave.

Just then something happened that was very favorable to the two fugitives.

The cub bears began to growl at the intruders.

Wild could dimly see the forms of three redskins the next moment, but when they heard the growling they came to a halt.

They listened for a few seconds and then went out of the cave, evidently satisfied that the ones they sought were not there.

Arietta breathed a sigh of relief when she saw this.

They could hear the Indians outside for the next ten minutes.

By and by the noise made by the searching redskins died away entirely.

Wild felt that there might be some of them along the bank of the creek watching the place, but this did not deter him from making up his mind to leave the cave.

It was just about half an hour from the time they first took refuge in the cave that they started to leave it.

Each had a loaded revolver and a knife, while each carried a tomahawk in addition.

Wild stepped cautiously out into the light of day and looked up and down.

Not a redskin was in sight.

"Come on, Et!" he exclaimed, in a low tone. "We will make a try for it."

Arietta, revolver in hand, followed the daring young deadshot along the short strip of sand to the place where they had descended to the bank of the creek.

It was about the only way to get up to the level ground above, as far as Wild could see.

If they should wade across the creek and take the other side they would put themselves in plain view of the Indian camp in short order.

Wild led the way up, both eyes and ears on the alert.

Once at the top he noticed that the redskins that had fallen under his fierce attack upon them had been removed from the ledge.

There was only one course to pursue now, and that was to proceed in the direction of the camp as quickly and as quietly as possible.

The two stepped forward.

As they rounded a short turn in the rocky wall they almost ran into half a dozen Indians who were standing there, evidently waiting for some one.

Two of them grabbed Arietta the very first thing, while the rest made an attack upon Young Wild West.

Whack! Whack!

Wild felled two of them with the tomahawk.

Crack!

He was compelled to shoot a third to save his own life, as one of the braves was about to send a bullet at him at short range.

Then one of them treacherously tripped him from behind and the daring boy fell heavily.

But the fight was not over yet, for Wild still retained possession of the weapons he had taken from the dead Indians.

Crack!

He fired a shot while lying at full length.

It caught one of the redskins he had felled, who had received but a glancing blow and was recovering in time to take part in the finish.

There was only one left who was able to do anything, and as Wild turned his revolver upon him the redskin made a bolt and ran from the spot.

It was the fellow who had succeeded in tripping him, too, but our hero would not shoot him in the back.

He let him go.

Springing to his feet, Wild looked in the direction Arietta's captors had taken her.

They were out of sight.

So many were the places to break one's range of vision that it was an easy matter for the redskins to get out of sight with their captive.

"This is too bad!" exclaimed our hero under his breath. "I suppose the Pawnees are still holding Arietta for a ransom now and that most likely they will raise the amount. I am going to pay it, just as sure as the sun will set to-night, but it won't be with money."

One of the redskins he had felled with the tomahawk had a rifle, and as Wild stooped to pick it up he found it was his own.

But that was not all!

About the brave's waist was his belt with his revolvers and knife in it.

His own weapons suited him much better than those he now had. He quickly took possession of them, but did not discard the tomahawk.

Wild did not linger at that spot.

He knew he would have to hide somewhere, so he ran down for the cave he had left but a short time before with his plucky sweetheart.

Young Wild West was not one of the sort to do anything rash.

If he had been he would have rushed madly in pursuit of Arietta's captors.

The daring young deadshot knew that his partners must be somewhere close by before this.

The sun was now nearly an hour high.

He went down the quick, steep slope and reached the cave in short order.

As he went into it the cub bears growled and squealed at a great rate.

But they did not offer to molest him.

The Pawnees must have been trying different tactics now if they were looking for him.

They were doing it in silence.

Probably they realized that their wild, savage yells only let the one they wanted to find know just where they were, and he could act accordingly.

Young Wild West did not fear the whole band of Pawnees now.

He was ready to fight them single-handed, but he did not want to lose his chances of saving Arietta, so he thought it wise to remain in hiding for a while.

He squatted in a dark corner and listened.

After waiting five minutes he suddenly saw a shadow cross the entrance.

The cubs were strangely silent now, and the next moment the outlines of a human form were discerned by the boy.

It was a Pawnee that he saw.

Wild gripped his tomahawk firmly.

The brave stepped softly into the cave.

"Ugh!" he said in a low tone.

Wild knew right away that the redskin knew of his presence in the cave.

And the grunt he heard was a friendly one.

He was too well acquainted with the customs of the redmen to be fooled on this.

"Ugh! Me friend to Young Wild West!" came from the Pawnee.

Wild at once arose to his feet.

He took the chances of finding out whether the brave was telling the truth or not.

"What do you want, redskin?" he asked, speaking in a low tone of voice.

"Me Firewater Jack; me come to take you to your paleface friends. Put on!"

As he said "put on," he handed over a dirty blanket and a feathered headgear that had belonged to one of the slain braves.

"I guess you are all right, Mr. Firewater Jack. Where are my friends?" said Wild, as he took the articles and quickly donned them.

"In woods other side of camp," answered Firewater Jack, who had stuck to his promise to Charlie and Jim and had come to the camp.

It so happened that the Indian had been close by when Arietta was captured for the second time, and he had followed Wild and watched where he went.

It had not been safe for him to venture into the cave until now, since several of the band were making a silent search for the daring young paleface brave, as they called him, and were close about.

Wild followed the Indian to the mouth of the cave.

One look at his face told him that he could trust him.

"Lead the way, Firewater Jack," he said. "I will get to my friends, and then we must save the paleface maiden."

"Me help; Firewater Jack good Pawnee," was the quick reply.

"All right. I am glad to hear that there is one good redskin in the bunch."

"Young Wild West have to look out. He must be very careful. Walk along lake and not hurry."

"All right. Leave that to me."

It seemed that luck was once more with our hero, for he walked boldly out with the redskin, and then they made their way along the shore of the lake past the Indian camp, and finally reached the clump of woods where Cheyenne Charlie and Jim Dart were in waiting.

CHAPTER X.

WHAT FIREWATER JACK DID.

Cheyenne Charlie and Jim Dart were ready to hug Young Wild West when they saw him approaching with Firewater Jack, the Pawnee.

They could tell who he was before he got very close to them.

After the greetings were over the scout asked:

"How about Arietta, Wild?"

"Well, they have got her again," was the reply. "I did my best, but they caught us by surprise, and while two of them got hold of Arietta and made off with her the rest gave me a stiff fight. I managed to get the best of them, but by that time Arietta was out of sight."

"I suppose you know they were holding her for ransom?" Jim queried.

"Yes, the treacherous daughter of the chief informed me of that. This has been what I call a great adventure with the redskins so far, and when we succeed in getting Arietta away from them we will have something to talk about for a while."

"Well, I reckon it won't be so very long afore a division of cavalry will be around this way," observed the scout. "They must be on their trail of their Pawnees afore this."

"Sure!" echoed Dart.

Firewater Jack shrugged his shoulders.

"Me good Injun," he said.

"Yes, that is pretty true," answered Jim. "You have done us a good turn. Now you must help us to get the paleface maiden away from your rascally tribe and then everything will be all right. Young Wild West will fix it so you will be pardoned for going away from the reservation with Elk Horn."

"Yes, I will see to that, Firewater Jack," spoke up our hero. "I guess I have enough influence with the head officials to fix your case all right. Don't you get alarmed. You just stick to the trail you have started to follow and you will come out at the top of the heap."

The redskin looked pleased at this.

He was going to be good for a while, anyhow.

Wild patted his horse on the neck and made a great deal of him as soon as Charlie and Jim had greeted him.

He now turned to him, and the intelligent sorrel stallion rubbed his nose against the boy's cheek.

"I am glad to see you again, old boy," Wild said to him. "I guess you will serve to carry me back, and Arietta also. Good boy, Spitfire!"

"I reckon you're hungry, Wild," remarked Charlie, as he took some provender from his saddle-bags. "We brought along somethin' to eat, you know."

"Well, a bite of something and a drink of water won't hurt me, I guess," was the reply. "I can manage very well without coffee, I suppose."

Firewater Jack admitted that he was hungry, too, and as there was sufficient to go around, he was given a share.

"Now, Jack," said Wild, when they were through eating, "I want you to go to the camp and do your best to get the girl prisoner free."

"What me do?" asked the brave, looking puzzled.

Wild thought a moment.

"I tell you what you can do," he said. "Just arrange it so she is free in the camp. If the scoundrels have got her tied in any shape, you must manage to loosen her. Tell her just where we are and show her where she might be able to get hold of a horse all bridled and ready for use. You can do that much, I guess."

"Me guess so," nodded the Pawnee.

"Well, you understand what is to be done, then?"

"Yes, me understand."

"All right, then. Go ahead. We'll wait here."

Firewater Jack set out without delay.

He had met with such great success the other time that he was more confident this time.

We will follow the brave.

Firewater Jack managed to reach the camp without being observed.

The Indians had quieted down considerably, though there was a number of them still out searching for Young Wild West.

Arietta had been placed in the same teepee that she had been taken from by Firewater Jack and the other three braves at the orders of Laughing Leaf.

The daughter of the old chief had not let it be known that she had anything to do with the stealing of the girl, and Elk Horn was under the impression that Young Wild West was in some manner responsible for it.

The Indian maiden was crafty, and she was playing her cards well.

She had not even advised Firewater Jack to keep his lips sealed.

But it is quite likely that she knew he would be the last one to tell of the plot.

He would simply place his own life in jeopardy, for she would be capable of putting the lie on him and exonerate herself without the least trouble.

Elk Horn sat in front of his wigwam smoking when Firewater Jack mingled with the braves in the camp after leaving Young Wild West and his partners in the woods not far away.

Near the chief sat his crafty daughter, putting the last touches to some fancy bead-work she was doing.

She saw the survivor of her four assistants of the early morning, but she did not look up.

Elk Horn took no notice of him any more than he did the rest of his followers.

The big chief, as he styled himself, had a full stomach now, and he had caught the paleface girl again.

That was sufficient to make him feel contented just then.

It was generally known among the Pawnees that Firewater Jack entertained feelings of regard for the young squaw named Sleepy Doe, so when he went over to the teepee where she was sitting at the entrance and sat down near her, no one took any more than ordinary notice of it, save one person.

That one person was Laughing Leaf.

She suspected that Firewater Jack was playing the part of a traitor, and she had noticed his absence and return.

But the brave who had decided to be "good" did not act out of the way, and when she saw him talking to Sleepy Doe in an ardent way she thought she might be mistaken.

Firewater Jack was telling Sleepy Doe that he was going to quit the band of Pawnees and return to the reservation

with the palefaces just as soon as the paleface maiden could be gotten away.

As the young squaw was his promised bride, she could but listen to him and think well of his plans.

Sleepy Doe finally agreed to give Arietta her liberty and tell her where to go and mount the horse that Firewater Jack would have in waiting.

This promise exacted from her, he arose and walked leisurely over to some of the braves he was used to talking to and sat down among them.

Laughing Leaf could see nothing in this, but she was still a bit suspicious.

She decided to force her father to put an end to the captive.

Then she felt she would have all obstacles out of the way in winning Young Wild West.

For the crafty Pawnee maiden had not given up hopes of having our hero take her for his squaw.

The girl began talking to the chief.

"Jilk Horn, my father, is the greatest chief of the Pawnees," she began flatteringly.

Elk Horn looked at her with stolid indifference and puffed away at his pipe.

He was used to having bouquets thrown at him, if we may use that term.

"Laughing Leaf is very proud of her father," went on the scheming girl.

"Ugh!" grunted the chief, showing just the least bit of interest.

"Laughing Leaf wants Elk Horn to let the squaws kill the paleface maiden. She must never leave here alive!"

Then the old chief showed great interest in what she said. But it was not the sort of interest she wanted him to show, though.

"Laughing Leaf is a fool!" he exclaimed. "Does she not know that her father would be hanged if the soldiers caught him if the paleface maiden was killed? He can order his braves to shoot the palefaces when they come to fight him, and he will be pardoned if the palefaces catch him. But he must not allow a prisoner to be killed."

"But Laughing Leaf wants it done," persisted the girl.

They were talking in their own language and Firewater Jack was close enough by to catch nearly all that was being said.

Laughing Leaf showed signs of great disappointment and anger as well.

She started to plead with the old chief, but he cut her short promptly.

"The paleface maiden will be held till her friends send five hundred dollars. Then they can have her," he said.

"Laughing Leaf must not talk like a crazy child. Her father is wise, and he can now see that he made a mistake in leading his braves from the reservation. Two weeks have we been away, and it is time for the soldiers to show themselves. We have killed no palefaces, though Young Wild West and his friends have ended the lives of many of my braves. We must have revenge, but not at this time. Young Wild West has got away and has gone back to his camp. I will send a brave to tell him that he must send five hundred dollars. Then the paleface maiden shall be taken to him and we will start on the march back to the reservation. Elk Horn has spoken."

Laughing Leaf moved away and sat down moodily.

But her evil nature was now thoroughly aroused, and no one knew this better than did Firewater Jack.

He was just thinking that it was time for him to get the horse ready to assist in Arietta's escape, when the old chief called him.

It was only by chance that he should be selected to deliver the message to Arietta's friends, and when he found that he was he felt doubly pleased.

When he had received his instructions he walked over to Sleepy Doe and said:

"You must tell the paleface maiden to slip out of the teepee in just two minutes. She can cut a hole in the back. I will be there with a horse."

The squaw nodded.

She looked uneasy, and as Firewater Jack was about to leave her, she said:

"Have two horses and I will go with the paleface maiden."

"You go, but only one horse," replied the Indian. "Two go on one horse and ride for the timber over there," and he nodded toward the place where our hero and his part-

ners were waiting. "There is a horse there for you. I will get another and follow."

Sleepy Doe understood, and though she had her misgivings that the project might result disastrously, she resolved to carry out the instructions of the brave who was so anxious to have her for his squaw.

The chief, or any one else who might have been looking, could not think otherwise than that Firewater Jack was bidding farewell to Sleepy Doe, as he might never see her again.

It was not a sure thing that he would be able to deliver the message to the palefaces.

They might shoot him before he could have a chance to do it.

The Pawnee, who was rendering so much assistance to our friends, put the bridles on two of the fleetest horses, instead of one.

He did not know but that he might be watched, but he went about it just as though he was not.

He was quite positive that Laughing Leaf would try to kill Arietta, and he was resolved that she should not do so.

But even as he led one of the horses around to the rear of the teepee in which Arietta was confined a pair of shining black eyes were watching him.

They belonged to the chief's daughter, and she could easily understand now that Firewater Jack was a traitor.

The brave mounted the other horse and rode right through the camp as though to go and deliver the message.

But let us see what Sleepy Doe was doing.

The young squaw had informed Arietta of what was going on.

Arietta was just as full of courage as she had ever been, and when she learned that Wild was free and with Charlie and Jim, she made up her mind that things were going to turn out all right, after all.

She had eaten of the breakfast Sleepy Doe brought her, and she now felt strong and ready to act.

The moment the squaw gave her the knife and told her to cut her way through the back of the teepee she set herself at it.

Two quick slashes and she had made the opening.

Out she went, and close behind her came Sleepy Doe, carrying in a bundle the few things she desired to take with her.

She took Arietta's arm and hurried her to the waiting horse, while things in the Pawnee camp remained just the same and the brave who paced back and forth in front of the teepee was ignorant of what was taking place.

Arietta and Sleepy Doe were soon on the back of the horse.

Two seconds later the horse started and they were on their way to the spot where Young Wild West and his partners were hiding.

CHAPTER XI.

ARIETTA DEFEATS LAUGHING LEAF.

Arietta held the bridle-rein of the horse, while Sleepy Doe sat behind her holding her on.

There was no saddle on the steed; Firewater Jack had no time to get one of the few owned by the Pawnees to put it on.

Consequently if it had not been for the squaw holding her in position Arietta could not have kept on the horse in the position she always rode in.

The escaping two got nearly fifty yards from the camp before they were discovered by the Pawnee braves.

But some one else had seen them go and was ready to follow them.

It was Laughing Leaf, as might be supposed.

She was mounted, and with a shrill war-whoop she dashed after them, waving a tomahawk, the blade of which glimmered with brightness in the sun.

Arietta could not help uttering a cry of defiance.

She had no weapon to defend herself with other than the knife the squaw had given her to cut her way out of the teepee, but she waved this at their pursuer.

Straight along the shore of the lake dashed the horse with its double burden, while Sleepy Doe held fast to the white girl with a grim determination.

Laughing Leaf could ride with the best of her race.

She had a good horse, too, and she soon found out that she was gaining on the paleface maiden she hated.

Halfway to the patch of timber an accident befell Arietta and the squaw.

The horse they were riding stumbled.

It was too much for them, and both were thrown.

But with great agility Arietta landed on her feet.

Sleepy Doe went rolling over the rough ground and landed in a confused heap.

Arietta still retained possession of her knife.

With a scream of delight, Laughing Leaf galloped up to the spot, her tomahawk raised to deliver the fair white girl her death-blow.

But Arietta was not going to die so easy.

She dodged the blow as it descended and then catching her foe by the ankle, pulled her from the horse.

The chief's daughter was on her feet in a twinkling, her eyes blazing with fury.

"The paleface maiden must die!" she hissed.

"Never by your hand!" retorted Arietta, standing on the defensive.

They were so engrossed that neither of them noticed what was going on around them.

They did not see the dozen or more mounted Pawnees hastening to the spot, nor did they see three mounted whites dash out of the woods and come toward them.

"Whoopee! Whoopee!"

Arietta recognized the familiar war-cry of Cheyenne Charlie, but she never turned her head.

She was having all she could do to dodge the vicious blows aimed at her with the tomahawk.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

Three shots rang out and as many saddles were emptied among the redskins.

Then the rest came to a halt.

Meanwhile Arietta was doing her best to defeat her relentless foe.

Sleepy Doe sat on the ground looking about in a dazed way.

The fall she had received partially stunned her and she scarcely knew what was taking place.

Arietta did not want to kill Laughing Leaf, though she knew positively that her own life was sought by her.

She wanted to disarm her, if possible.

She was watching her chance.

It came pretty quickly.

As the Pawnee maiden struck savagely at her for the fourth time Arietta stepped aside and then brought the edge of her knife down upon the back of her foe's hand.

Down dropped the tomahawk!

Laughing Leaf had received a cut, but not a dangerous one, for all that.

Arietta picked up the Indian hatchet in a twinkling.

"Stand back!" she exclaimed, advancing threateningly upon Laughing Leaf. "I don't want to hurt you any more, but I will if you don't stop!"

Furiously the Pawnee chief's daughter rushed at her.

Whack!

Young Wild West's brave sweetheart hit her a blow on the head with the flat of the tomahawk.

The blow stunned her and down went Laughing Leaf, defeated!

"Get up, Sleepy Doe!" cried Arietta, taking the squaw by the arm. "Run for the timber!"

Sleepy Doe obeyed.

Her senses had returned to her now.

But Young Wild West and his partners were only a few yards distant now.

They were at a halt, standing behind their horses, waiting for the redskins to put up a fight.

But for some reason or other they did not.

The Pawnees were evidently waiting for orders from their chief.

Arietta lost no time in leading the young squaw to where Wild and his partners awaited them.

"That was a pretty fight you made, Et," said our hero, as he assisted the brave girl to the back of his horse. "I saw that you could do it, so I did not interfere. One time, though, I thought I would be compelled to break the vixen's arm with a bullet."

Jim Dart took Sleepy Doe on his horse with him when he heard Arietta say that she was to go with them, and then they rode on a walk for the timber.

But when they got there they were not out of the woods, literally so to speak.

The Pawnees were between them and their camp.

That must have been the reason the redskins had not pressed them any harder.

It was possible, though, that the unerring aim of the three had taught the redskins that it was best not to open fire on them.

But Wild was going to take his chances of getting around by the way Charlie and Jim had come there.

He had heard from Arietta that Firewater Jack had been despatched with a message to their camp, and that they would in all probability come across him.

Sleepy Doe, who was about as badly frightened as she had ever been in her whole life, mounted the horse left there by Firewater Jack, and then Wild led the way, Arietta on the sorrel with him.

It was a roundabout course they were going to take, and if they could elude the vigilance of the redskins and get on the straight trail they might stand a show.

It was worth trying for, anyhow.

Halfway around they came upon Firewater Jack.

He was riding to meet them, thus showing that he was still adhering to his determination to be a good Indian.

The brave was much pleased to find his promised bride all right, and he gave vent to his feelings by patting her on the head in a gentle way.

Young Wild West gave the word and then all set out at a faster gait.

In five minutes they had reached a point from where they could proceed straight to the camp.

Charlie and Jim had told Wild about the cave they had discovered in the face of the cliff, and our hero felt that if they once got there they would be able to hold off the Pawnees until help arrived.

He was confident that it would not be long before the cavalry would show up.

They surely had started after the rebellious Pawnees long before this.

As they pushed on and no signs of pursuit showed they all felt that the victory had been about won.

"I guess I have paid the Pawnees nearly all that is coming to them, Et," said Wild. "If they don't think so they have only to ask for more."

"Oh, they'll want more, all right," spoke up Cheyenne Charlie, smiling grimly. "They won't be satisfied to let it go at this."

"Elk Horn tell Laughing Leaf he no want to kill palefaces unless they fight him," said Firewater Jack.

"Well, he will fight us and make us fight him, so then he will have all the excuse he needs," remarked Jim Dart.

"He will want to kill Firewater Jack and Sleepy Doe now," the Indian said, slowly.

"But we won't let him," added Wild, quickly.

The brave's eyes lighted up.

"Young Wild West is a great and noble brave," he exclaimed.

"All right. Let it go at that."

It was not long before they came in sight of the place they had camped at the night before.

There was nothing that looked like a camp there now, and this made it appear strange to Wild and Arietta.

Charlie and Jim had not told them how they had advised Hop Wah to get everything inside the cave.

They now spoke about it.

They rode right up, and before they could have time to dismount the Chinaman rushed out into view, followed by Anna and Eloise.

"Well, we got back, but it took quite a while," called out our hero, with a laugh.

Arietta slid from the sorrel and was nearly smothered from the hugs and kisses she got from the two girls.

"Who have you here?" Anna asked a minute later, nodding at the Indian couple.

"Firewater Jack and Sleepy Doe," Arietta answered. "They are going to get married when they get back to the reservation and have been pardoned for going away with Elk Horn." "Going to get married, eh? Well, I should like to witness the ceremony."

"There is no reason why you shouldn't," spoke up Young Wild West. "But just wait till we get out of this trouble we're in. I guess we've got a little more fighting ahead of us before we see any Pawnee wedding ceremonies performed."

The faces of Anna and Eloise clouded.

Evidently they had thought the trouble with the Indians was over with.

Hop Wah stood looking first at Firewater Jack and then at Sleepy Doe.

There was a queer smile on his yellow face.

"Injuns gittee mallied?" he asked, looking at Wild.

"Yes, Hop, that is what they want to do just as soon as they can," was the reply.

"Me likee mally Injun squaw; velly nicee."

"Well, why don't you try and find one who will have you?"

"Me lookee up some time," and the Chinaman looked as though he meant it.

Wild now took a look at the roomy cave that had been discovered during his absence.

"I guess that is a pretty good sort of a place to stop at," he admitted. "We'll make it our headquarters till something turns up, for it will never do to leave here now. If it were not for the mule and pack-horses we could get away, but we can't afford to leave them behind."

Firewater Jack seemed to be more than satisfied with the course he had pursued.

He jumped in and helped fix up things inside the cave.

"I tell you what you can do," said Wild; "you mount your horse and ride out and see if the Pawnees are coming this way."

"All right."

The brave was away in less than two minutes.

He had not been gone long when they saw him riding back at a swift pace.

Then a loud yell broke out and they saw that over a hundred Pawnees were after him.

"I guess there's going to be a fight," observed Young Wild West, calmly. "Get ready, boys!"

At his orders the girls went inside the cave.

Then the horses that were outside were hurried in.

As Firewater Jack rode up and dismounted Wild saw to it that his steed was afforded protection, too.

The Indian had not offered to fight his own people before, but he now unslung his rifle.

"Me stick to Young Wild West!" he exclaimed.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

Wild knew that if the redskins were persistent they would probably get the best of it, unless help arrived.

But when the entire band halted a couple of hundred yards away without firing a single shot he made up his mind that possibly it was not going to be so bad as he had thought.

"I guess they don't want to fight us, Firewater," he said, turning to the Pawnee with a smile.

"Elk Horn think about the soldiers," was the reply.

"Probably."

Just then one of the Indians came riding from the ranks with a white flag tied to the barrel of his gun.

"A flag of truce!" exclaimed Jim Dart.

As they heard this Arietta and the rest came out of the cave.

They were anxious to know how things were progressing. The brave carrying the truce flag rode up to within fifty feet of the camp and came to a halt.

Then Wild stepped out into view.

"What do you want, redskin?" he asked.

"Me want to talk with Young Wild West," was the reply.

"All right. Go ahead."

"Elk Horn say he no want to make fight with palefaces."

"Good! I am real glad to hear that."

"Elk Horn want to fight Young Wild West alone."

"Ah! Your chief don't want to make war with us, but he wants to settle the business by fighting it out with me, eh?"

"Yes," answered the brave, nodding his head. "Young Wild West got paleface maiden and no give big chief money. Elk Horn great brave, and he want to show Young Wild West he no coward."

"I see. He is standing on honor now. He has been beaten out by us, and now he wants to show us that he is not afraid to fight. All right. You go back and tell Elk Horn that I will fight him in any style he wants."

The Indian messenger turned and rode back to his crowd.

A few minutes later Elk Horn came riding toward them carrying a long lance that was profusely decorated with ribbons.

Halfway between his forces and the cave he halted.

Then he thrust the lance in the ground and sat with folded arms on the back of his horse.

"Fetch out Spitfire, Hop," said Wild. "I guess he wants

it to be a duel on horseback, and the lance marks the neutral ground."

The sorrel was soon saddled and made ready.

Then Wild mounted and rode out boldly to meet the chief. He was armed with his brace of Colt's revolvers and his hunting-knife.

His Winchester was left at the camp.

"Ugh!" grunted the chief, as he rode up and halted near him.

"Well, what is the trouble, Elk Horn? You don't want me to kill you, do you?"

"Young Wild West heap much brave," was the reply. "He shoot like the lightning's flash and he laughs at danger. He is a great brave."

"Elk Horn is a great brave, too," retorted our hero, with a smile. "He steals a paleface maiden, and then when he finds he can't get five hundred dollars from her friends he wants to show what a great brave he is. Young Wild West will cut off his ear and make him a present of it to nail in his wigwam."

The chief's eyes flashed dangerously at this.

He knew the boy was poking fun at him.

"Young Wild West fight Elk Horn with knife!" he exclaimed.

"All right! Let yourself go, you redskin galoot!"

Both drew their hunting-knives, and without parley the two horses began prancing around, guided by their riders.

The sorrel seemed to know just what was required of him, for he answered to the slightest pressure of the boy's knees, turning this way and that as Wild wanted him to do.

The two knives clashed and the sparks showed in the sunlight.

A duel on horseback is certainly an awe-inspiring sight.

But those who were witnessing that which was taking place had seen similar fights.

Wild kept the fight going for about three minutes.

Then by a deft movement on his part he struck the knife from the hand of his opponent.

It fell to the ground a dozen feet away and the old chief was at his mercy.

But he did not turn to flee.

That was not one of the characteristics of Elk Horn.

Folding his arms across his stomach, he thrust out his chest and exclaimed:

"Elk Horn will die, but he is not a coward!"

"Which would you rather do, Elk Horn, die or live with one of your ears cut off?" Wild asked him.

"Die!" was the quick but firm reply.

"Well, I guess you need not do either. Your life belongs to me, but I will give it to you! Go and lead your braves back to the reservation."

The old chief looked at him a moment in silence.

Then without so much as a "Thank you" he turned his horse and rode slowly back to his men.

Things had been happening in a hurry ever since our friends found there were hostile Indians about the day before, but they were not done happening yet.

Suddenly the blast of a bugle sounded in the distance and every one who heard it knew that troopers were coming.

"Hurrah!" cried Young Wild West, waving his hat. "I guess the finish of our adventure with the Pawnees is pretty close at hand. Well, I guess I have paid them Arietta's ransom all right."

The Pawnees remained right where they were, looking at Young Wild West to see what he would do.

"I guess they want me to intercede a little for them, boys," he called out to his partners. "I'll just see to it that the troopers don't get reckless and open fire on them. They are waiting to get the chance to surrender, so we may as well avert bloodshed."

About two hundred cavalymen now showed up at the brow of a hill less than a quarter of a mile away.

Wild rode to meet them.

He did not know the officer in command, but he soon made him understand who he was.

After a short talk with him Wild rode back at the head of the troopers.

Elk Horn came over at a call and formally surrendered, giving up his firearms and ammunition.

Then a detachment was left to guard the prisoners and the cavalry went over to the encampment on the shore of the lake.

Every redskin there, including men, women and children, were taken as prisoners.

It turned out that our friends did not need the cave to keep out of the way of the bullets of the redskins, after all.

That noon they cooked their dinner over a fire near the creek.

The cavalrymen were camped about a hundred yards from them with their prisoners on parole.

Wild told the officer in command all that had happened, and he was listened to with much surprise.

"Held the young lady for ransom, did they?" he asked. "Well, that is something new for the Pawnees, I must say! Some white villain no doubt put that in the head of Elk Horn some day or other."

Laughing Leaf was nearly as dejected as her father.

The blow Arietta struck her with the flat of the tomahawk had not proved a serious one, though it had rendered her unconscious for a time.

"There's a gal what would make a good wife for you, Hop," observed Cheyenne Charlie, as they were all looking at the prisoners after their dinner. "Why don't you ask her if she will marry you? She wanted Wild, but you always say you are 'allice same as Young Wild West,' so maybe she won't know the difference."

Hop grinned.

Then he felt of his pigtail and shook his head in the negative.

"If me mally dat Injun gal me losee um pigtail putty quickie, allee samee Jackee Lobinson!" he declared.

Laughing Leaf heard what he said, and she understood enough of it to make her more savage.

Picking up a stone, she threw it at the Chinaman's head.

But he succeeded in dodging it, after which he got to a safe distance.

That afternoon the cavalry set out with their prisoners.

The reservation was about a hundred miles distant, and as it was "tight on the way our friends were traveling, they meant to stop there.

But they decided not to leave until the next morning.

Wild had easily arranged it with the officer in command of the cavalry for Firewater Jack and Sleepy Doe to remain with them and come when they did.

It was a good rest that Young Wild West and his friends

had, and early the next morning they were ready to follow the trail of the cavalrymen and their Pawnee prisoners.

When our friends finally reached the army post at the edge of the reservation they learned that one of the Pawnee prisoners had committed suicide on the way over.

It was Laughing Leaf.

Probably it was just as well.

The next day Wild got permission for Firewater Jack and Sleepy Doe to be married.

"Who are you going to have to stand up with you, Firewater?" our hero asked.

"Young Wild West," was the reply.

"All right. Who does Sleepy Doe want to stand up with her?"

"Me have Chinee!" the bride-to-be answered, much to the surprise of all hands.

Everybody smiled but Cheyenne Charlie, and he laughed outright.

"Great gimlets!" he exclaimed; "I've seen many funny things, but I reckon this is goin' to beat 'em all! But what difference does it make, though? Injuns eat dog meat at a weddin' feast, an' I reckon it ain't got out of their way to have a heathen Chinee for a bridesmaid. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! this is great, this is!"

But Sleepy Doe stuck to it that she wanted Hop for a bridesmaid, or whatever it could be called, and the Celestial obliged.

There was a very large attendance at the ceremony, and everybody declared that it was great.

But let us hope that Firewater Jack and his bride lived happily ever after and were blessed with plenty of paposes to cheer their lives in their old age.

Young Wild West and his companions went on to Santa Fe, and from there they took a train to El Paso, then riding the rest of the distance to our hero's ranch without mishap or incident worth recording.

So that is how Young Wild West paid the Pawnees.

Next week's issue will contain "YOUNG WILD WEST'S SHOOTING MATCH; OR, THE 'HOW-DOWN' AT SHASTA."

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HELP YOUR COUNTRY!

HOLD YOUR LIBERTY BONDS.

Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo urges the purchasers of Liberty Loan Bonds of both the First and Second issues to hold fast to their bonds. They are the best investment in the world.

The Secretary's statement was called forth by the fact that Liberty Bond holders are being approached from time to time by agents seeking to induce them to part with their Liberty Loan Bonds and take in exchange securities which in a number of cases are of a very questionable value, and was prompted by the desire to protect the bondholders against ill-advised disposition of their bonds.

The Secretary expresses the hope that every purchaser of a Liberty Bond will realize that the only genuine help that he gives his Government is keeping his bond as an investment so long as it is possible for him to do so. He states, however, that no just objection lies to the sale of a Liberty Bond where real necessity exists for its sale.

INSURANCE FOR EVERY FIGHTER.

The Treasury Department is making every effort to have every member of America's fighting forces take advantage of the Government-insurance plan, which Secretary McAdoo asserts to be "the most just and humane provision ever made by any nation for its soldiers and sailors."

The purpose is rapidly being achieved, the insurance having passed the third billion mark in the total of policies written, and there are many military units in which every member has taken insurance.

The automatic insurance provided by the law is only partial and limited protection, payable only to wife, child, or widowed mother and ceased after February 12, 1918. It is important, therefore, not only to the soldiers and sailors of the country, but to their families and dependents, that before that date they availed themselves of the full Government protection, which can go as high as \$10,000, and is payable to a wife, husband, child, grandchild, parent, brother, or sister.

The law also provides for the re-education and rehabilitation of the totally disabled and monthly compensation to those disabled.

ALL AMERICANS CAN SERVE.

Every man, woman, and child in this country, who wants to serve the country, can serve it and serve it in a very simple and effective way, Secretary McAdoo says. That service is to lend your money to the Government. Every 25 cents loaned to the Government is a help at this time and practically every man, woman, and child by making some trifling sacrifice, some denial of a pleasure, or giving up some indulgence, can render the Government that support.

Every 25 cents will do something to help a wounded American soldier, wounded fighting for the American people and American liberty. Every cent loaned the Government contributes something for the safety and strength and success of our soldiers and sailors, equipping them, maintaining them, clothing them, feeding them, and giving them artillery and ammunition and all things needed for their efficiency and triumph.

The Secretary of the Treasury says this question is before every American—"Are you willing to help the fighting men of our Nation, and in helping them to help yourselves? Are you willing in helping them and helping yourselves to make liberty supreme throughout the world and make the atrocities, the infamous and unspeakable crimes against civilization committed by Germany impossible forever in the future?"

KILL NO HENS OR PULLETS IS FOOD ORDER.

The United States Food Administration announces that it has forbidden licensed trading in live or freshly killed hens and pullets. Licensed dealers have been notified that fresh stock of this kind already purchased must have been disposed of by Feb. 23 and additional stocks may not be purchased. They may still handle stored or frozen stocks. By restricting the killing of chickens which should soon be heavy layers, the Food Administration hopes to increase the production of eggs, adding to the available market supply and at the same time allowing them to go into storage during the season of high production at a price which will not necessitate unreasonable figures for storage eggs next fall and winter. Further slaughter would possibly reduce this year's production to the danger line.

Increased cost of feeding, combined with present attractive market prices, has influenced many poultry raisers to dispose of birds which should add to the spring and summer egg production. If the slaughter should continue at the rate which has ruled in recent months, there would be a very real shortage of eggs this spring, with correspondingly high prices paid for those placed in storage. Both the Food Administration and the Department of Agriculture have advised saving all hens and pullets for egg production. The Food Administration some time ago requested dealers to reduce the slaughter of possible egg producers, urging them to procure wherever possible cocks and cockerels. It has now taken a further step and placed the full power of its authority behind a definite prohibition. Failure to observe this ruling would constitute a violation of the food-control act. It would be followed by revocation of license or could be punished by a fine of not more than \$5,000, by imprisonment for not more than two years, or by all three.

DICK DENTON'S SCHOOLDAYS

—OR—

THE WAR OF THE HIGHS AND LOWS

By DICK ELLISON

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER XX (Continued).

Dick raised no objection, but the question was how to make the sneak.

They went all over the ledge, but could discover no way.

Yet the dwarf had come up, and that very quickly.

"He must have had a ladder," said Dick.

"Don't believe a word of it," replied Archie.

"Let's get way back and shin along the rocks beyond here. I believe we will find our show that way as quick as any."

They tried this plan, and it brought success.

In a few minutes they discovered what they sought, and were able to climb down to the ledge below.

And upon this ledge opened the cave.

"We are almost there," said Archie. "Oh, Dick, I am so nervous. What if it should be my father? Of course, he must be crazy! If he refuses to come with me what shall I do?"

Now, all this Dick had pondered upon before, and he had no answer to give.

"I'm blest if I know, Arch," he replied, "but the first thing surely is to find him. Let's come on boldly to the cave. We found the dwarf friendly before, and I have no doubt we shall now. If you can only get a chance to tell him your story I am sure he will help us out."

They hurried in the direction of the cave.

It was easy walking here, and in a very few minutes they found themselves facing the hole under the ledge.

It was really quite a sizable cavern.

The boys could not see the end of it as they peered in.

"Nobody here," said Dick, "but the fire shows that some one has recently been here; then there are all those bones and bread crusts, and those bottles. Oh, say, what's that?"

Further back something white projected from behind a rock.

"Looks like a big bundle," said Archie, as they pushed into the cave.

"Why, it's a lot of stuff tied up in a bed quilt," exclaimed Dick.

"Must belong to the dwarf."

"Well, then, by Jove, whether it does or not, I

propose that we have a look at it. We may get a clue to the mystery that way."

"Call first! We don't want to get caught at it," said Archie.

Dick gave a shout.

But there was no answer save the echo.

"I don't believe there is anybody in there," he said, after waiting a few minutes.

Archie began to untie the bed quilt.

As the sides fell away, Dick gave a shout.

"Bless my soul, this looks like some burglar's plunder!" he cried.

In the bundle was a handsome clock, a lot of silverware, some of which had been broken, two small oil paintings, and numerous other things.

"This is burglar's stuff, surest thing you know," cried Dick. "Why, what's this? What's this?"

The spoons were marked "Irwin."

So were some of the other pieces of plate.

There were two silk dresses, and the name Irwin was found on the lining of both.

"Great Scott! Some one has been robbing the Misses Irwin," cried Dick.

"And just think! It must be the dwarf, and perhaps my father had a hand in it, Dick," Archie groaned.

"He's crazy—I mean the yellow-haired man. I don't believe he is your father at all," said Dick.

At the same instant the entrance to the cave was darkened.

"Here they are! Come on, boys!" cried a man, who stood with raised rifle facing the two Lows.

"Up hands, or I fire!" he added, and then bawled: "Come on, boys! Come on! I have them covered. I've caught them with the goods, by gum!"

It was Sheriff Culverson, who, it will be remembered, had no love for Dick Denton or any other Low.

CHAPTER XXI.

ARRESTED AS BURGLARS.

And right here Dick, through his inexperience and lack of knowledge of men, made a fearful mistake.

"Come, now, Mr. Culverson," he cried, "don't you be a fool. We have just stumbled upon this stuff. You know me perfectly well, and you know that I am no burglar; no more is Archie. Just come and see what we have found here, and put down that gun!"

It was not the sort of speech to conciliate a vain, ignorant man.

Sheriff Culverson had not forgotten the day Dick led the attack on him, and ran him and his assistant off the academy grounds.

In fact, he had been treasuring up that insult, as he considered it, of course, and was only waiting for a chance to get revenge.

"Throw up your hands or I fire!" he shouted. "The law justifies me in it. It would be a positive pleasure to shoot a young cub like you!"

"Up hands, Dick," whispered Archie, becoming alarmed. "He's mean enough to do anything."

This remark also reached the sheriff's ears, and did not mend matters.

Archie threw up his hands, but Dick still demurred.

He was brought to his senses, however, when Mr. Culverson let fly, and the bullet whizzed past his ear, flattening itself on the wall behind him.

A few seconds later six men came tumbling into the cave.

In an instant all was confusion, for everybody wanted to talk at once.

"Here they are! I got 'em!" bawled the sheriff.

All hands held the other side of the confab, first one butting in, then another, or both together.

"Who be they?"

"A couple of Dr. De Long's boys."

"Know them?"

"Sure I know them! They are the worst of the bunch, and they are all bad enough. Don't you see they have got the goods!"

"What made you fire?"

"The biggest one, that's Dick Denton, tried to attack me, but I brought him to terms."

"Liar!" cried Dick, indignantly. "I never raised a finger against you, as you very well know. No one but a coward would shoot at an unarmed man!"

This didn't improve matters a bit.

Dick was rapidly going from bad to worse.

"Do shut up," whispered Archie as the men crowded about them. "Pull yourself together, Dick."

The next few minutes were pretty strenuous ones.

Dick was handcuffed by the sheriff, and Archie, for lack of another pair of handcuffs, had his hands tied behind his back.

As every one wanted to talk and to examine the stuff in the bed quilt, the boys found it impossible to get a word in edgewise, until at last Dick appealed to one of the posse, whom he slightly knew.

This was Mr. Bellows, the grocer at Centreport, with whom Dr. De Long traded.

"Look here, Mr. Bellows," cried Dick, "I appeal to you for fair play. It is no joke to be taken for burglars, and to be shot at and not allowed to open

one's mouth. We are two of Dr. De Long's boys, and there is going to be trouble come out of this."

"Trouble enough for you, you young rascal," sneered the sheriff.

"I demand to be heard!" cried Dick.

"Let the boy speak," said Mr. Bellows. "We all have our rights, Mr. Culverson. Besides, it can do no harm to hear what he has to say."

"Then let me ask what all this means," said Dick,

"It means that the house of the Misses Irwin was entered and robbed last night," replied Bellows. "A lot of valuable stuff was stolen, besides a pocketbook containing two thousand dollars."

"Which we shall probably find on that young rascal when we come to search him," sneered the sheriff.

"I am very sorry for the Misses Irwin," replied Dick; "but it is absolute nonsense to accuse us. We were merely wandering about on Grim Face, and came by accident upon this cave. Finding the bundle here, we naturally opened it, and had no sooner done so than that crazy man came rushing in and fired at us. That's the whole story, and it's the truth."

"Unfortunately we know a little more than that," sneered the sheriff. "I happen to have evidence that you two are in the habit of prowling about at night. Only night before last, Mr. Bellows, a mob of Dr. De Long's boys were seen passing along the road in front of the Misses Irwin's seminary between one and two o'clock. A pretty time of night for honest people to be out of their beds. Do you deny it, you young scamp?"

"No; I can't deny it," cried Dick. "We were just out for a lark, and it can be proved."

"Well, then, you will find this no lark, let me tell you," retorted Culverson.

"But come, gentlemen," he added, "we must search these boys and take them to jail."

There was no help for it. Protest was quite useless.

Dick and Archie were now searched from head to foot.

Even when no pocketbook turned up the sheriff did not relent, but fiercely questioned Dick as to what he had done with it.

At last they got on the move, and the boys were led prisoners down the mountain.

When they reached the road, teams were found waiting for them.

Dick and Archie were bundled into an open wagon with the sheriff and two other men, and the start for Centreport was made.

Dick insisted that they be taken to the Dudman House so that he could inform Dr. De Long of what had occurred, but no heed was paid to his request.

They were to be subjected to further humiliation, however, for just as they reached the female seminary, there were both the Misses Irwin, followed by all their girls, filing out of the gate, starting on their morning walk.

(To be continued.)

CURRENT NEWS

Next to flies, dirty fingers are the greatest danger as disease carriers. It is wise, therefore, to wash the hands immediately before eating, handling, preparing or serving food; after using the toilet, and after attending to the sick or touching anything dirty. Keep the nails cleaned, also, and avoid touching the mouth with the fingers.

The Red Cross has announced that families having a member named on a list of casualties should beware of lawyers representing themselves as claim agents and charging high fees for the recovery of insurance or other benefits. These families are advised instead either to employ a lawyer known personally to them or seek the aid of Red Cross workers in the Home Service sections, who are prepared to give necessary assistance to all relatives of soldiers or sailors.

Residents of Venice, Cal., recently were telling the latest fish story of the beach resort in which C. A. Post enacted the part of the hero. According to the story, which was verified by Chief of Police Harry Raymond and several detectives, Post caught a steel head trout in the lagoon near Windward Avenue without the use of hook and line. Post declared he was rowing on the lagoon with one hand trailing in the water when the fish approached and began to nibble his finger. Post, according to the yarn, quickly closed his hand and tossed the fish into the boat.

In addition to his numerous other duties, Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin D. Roosevelt is trying to find a list of names of birds in order to provide names for the new fleet of mine sweepers. Mr. Roosevelt would not state how many names he had to have, but he does not believe he has found sufficient names to meet the requirements of the situation. But the names for mine sweepers are not the only ones that he finds difficult to supply in this day of an enlarged Navy. He says he needs a great many more names of Navy heroes to be given to craft of the destroyer type. The destroyer fleet is increasing very rapidly and the list of names of men whom history has recognized as entitled to this distinction is getting very short in comparison with this need.

Secretary Baker has signed an order approving the establishment of a school for Army chaplains at Fort Monroe to give appointees special training for their work. Including the large numbers recently appointed there are now approximately 570 chaplains in the Service, and this number will gradually increase with the passage of expected legislation permitting appointment of one chaplain for

every 1,200 officers and men. The school at Fort Monroe will give the appointee a knowledge of military law, military science, tactics and hygiene. Plans for the school were presented by the Rev. Clyde F. Armitage, secretary of the General Committee on Army and Navy Chaplains, and were revised and approved for the War Department by Chaplain Alfred A. Pruden, U. S. A., of Fort Monroe.

Interest in food saving has given new life to a familiar old swindle, the "magic butter maker," a device whereby the delighted housewife who sees it demonstrated for the first time is led to believe that she can transform one pound of butter into two pounds. This magic butter maker operates on the simple principle of churning 1 pound of butter with a pint of milk, and sometimes the addition of vegetable oils. The product which results looks like butter and weighs two pounds when placed on a pair of scales, but unfortunately it is deficient in butter fat, the additional bulk and weight being chiefly water and air. Standard creamery butter should have about 80 per cent. butter fat. "Magic" butter made with this device has less than 50 per cent. It is illegal to offer such a swindling product for sale. A promoter demonstrating the magic butter maker was arrested recently in San Francisco and subjected to heavy fine, charged with false advertising.

A merchant vessel of nearly 20,000 gross tons which is now used as a transport went into drydock at Balboa, Canal Zone, on December 30, 1917, for repairs on account of damage in two collisions, and for alterations of a general nature. On January 20 the ship was released with the work completed. The job is the quickest ever done at the canal shops. Three Sundays and a holiday were included in the time of making the repairs, and on these days as little work was done as was consistent with keeping up the pace. Included in the items of repair were—a new stem, sixty feet long, fourteen inches deep, and four inches thick. A new hawse pipe of seven and one-half tons. This involved the cutting away of all material around the pipe including forty tons of cement that had been placed there for temporary repair, before the measurements could be taken and the templets made; the making of patterns, casting of the pipe, and riveting it upon the ship. Repairs to the stern. Extensive repairs to fire main and increasing the number of coaling chutes, and other alterations which would increase the coal carrying capacity of the ship. The force employed on the work included 450 skilled mechanics, 1,000 helpers and laborers, and the total number of hours worked was about 400.

FROM COLLEGE TO MEXICO

—OR—

THE WHITE GIRL QUEEN OF THE YAQUIS

By "PAWNEE JACK"

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XIV (Continued).

"But you won't be prisoners long," with a smile.
"Is that indeed true?" exclaimed Tom, a look of delight on his face.

"Yes; you were fortunate to fall into the hands of my tribe of Yaquis. I will see to it that you are not injured."

"Oh, thank you!" said Tom.

"Are there other tribes of Yaquis in these parts?" queried Bob.

"Oh, yes; a number of them."

"And you get along well with one another?"

A cloud appeared on the girl's face for an instant.
"No, we don't get along as well as we might," she said. "We have wars with one another, once in a while."

"Why don't you leave here and go to the United States to live?" asked Bob.

A somewhat sad expression came over the girl's face.

"I have thought of it," she admitted; "but, you see, I am half Yaqui, even though I do look like a white girl; and, too, I know but little of the way the people there live, and I have been afraid that I would not be happy. That I would be miserable, in fact."

"You are not happy here," said Bob. "You are not satisfied, I am sure."

"No, indeed; but, as I have just said, I am afraid that if I were to leave here and go to the United States, I would be jumping from the frying-pan into the fire, as father used to say."

"What was your father's last name?"

"Melville, James Melville."

Tom started, and gave utterance to an exclamation.

"What!" he cried; "James Melville, you say?"

"Yes," with a look of surprise.

"What part of the United States was he from; do you know? Did he ever say?" asked the youth, excitedly.

"From New York State, I think he said."

"You don't remember the name of the town?"

"I think he said Elmira."

Tom's face was flushed and his eyes sparkled with excitement.

"Well, what do you think of this, Bob!" he cried.

"Lucia is—yes, I am sure of it!—there can be no mistake about it—my cousin!"

"What!" almost yelled Bob, in amazement. "Your—cousin!"

Lucia was staring at Tom in wonder and surprise. Then her face lighted up, and the youths thought they had scarcely ever seen a more beautiful girl.

"You—mean—to say—that—that—I am—your cousin?" she stammered.

"Yes, Lucia. My mother's maiden name was Melville; and she had a brother James, who went out West years and years ago, and was never heard of again. I will wager anything—in fact, I am positive, that your father was my mother's brother!"

"Oh, Tom!—may I call you Tom?" the girl breathed. "Oh, can this indeed be true?"

"I am sure of it," said Tom.

"And so am I," nodded Bob. "Now that you have told me about your uncle, I will say that I can see a decided resemblance between Lucia and your mother, Tom."

"So can I. I was struck by the fact that she looked like someone I knew, at the very first, but could not think who it was. Yes, she looks much like mother must have looked when her age."

"Oh, I am so happy!" breathed the girl. "I have found the American relatives of my father, and I will have somewhere to go, if I decide to leave here."

"Oh, you must leave here!" declared Tom. "You are my mother's niece, and you must go back with us! Mother will be wild with delight. She is a widow, and I am her only child, and I am away from home most all the time, and that leaves her alone and lonely. She will be delighted when I take you to her and say, 'Here, mother, is Lucia Melville, your niece!'"

"Oh, I will go back with you!" cried Lucia. "I must!"

"Yes," nodded Tom; "you must."

Then a cloud came over the girl's face.

"But we will have to be careful," she said. "My people here will not let me go, if they can help it—and they will be able to prevent it, if they learn what I intend doing. We must keep it secret, between ourselves."

"Yes, indeed!" nodded Tom. "None of them understand English, do they?"

"No; but they are good sign-readers, and I can see by the looks on their faces, even now, that they are wondering what all this excitement is about. They may become suspicious if we keep on, this way; so we had better calm down."

"All right, Lucia. We leave everything to you. Whatever you say for us to do, we will do."

"Why are you here, in Yaquiland?" Lucia asked.

"We came here to seek for hidden treasure," replied Tom. "It is somewhere in this region, and we came up the river in a sloop, and——"

"Yes, the chief told me about the sloop. We will go back to it."

"I hope so," said Tom, earnestly.

"You wish to stay and try to find the treasure?"

"Oh, yes."

"We certainly do," nodded Bob. "After having come so far and risked so much, we don't want to give up without making an effort to find what we came after."

"Well, I think I can fix it with my people so that you may be permitted to go free and prosecute your search."

"Do so, Lucia! And when we have found the treasure and secured it, or have decided that there is no treasure to be found, we will get aboard the sloop and sail away."

The white queen of the Yaquis nodded.

"Very good," she said, her eyes sparkling.

CHAPTER XV.

AN ATTACK.

Then she turned to the one who appeared to be the chief, and talked to him long and earnestly in the Yaqui language.

He listened with interest, nodding his head occasionally, and when she had finished talking to him, she turned to the youths and said:

"It is all right. He says that you shall be set free and permitted to prosecute your search for gold."

"Thank you," said Tom.

"Good!" from Bob.

"I told him that you were searching for the loose gold in the mountains. I did not say you expected to find a buried treasure."

"That was wise, I think," nodded Tom.

"Yes," agreed Bob: "if they thought there was some buried treasure to be found in this part of the country, they would probably go in to find it themselves."

The girl nodded.

"Yes, so they would," she agreed.

Then she looked at the Mexicans, and said:

"What shall be done with them?"

"Well," said Tom; "if you leave it to us, we will say for you to keep them here, prisoners. They are enemies to us. They belong to a band that had us prisoners on the sloop yesterday."

"No, no! Let us go free, too!" cried one of the Mexicans. "We will promise to go away an' not go back to Bonsel."

"Don't trust them, Tom," said Bob.

"I don't believe it will be safe to do so," agreed Tom.

"We will keep our word," whined the other.

"If you are kept here prisoners we will know that you will keep your word," said Bob. "Otherwise we could not be sure of that."

"But these savages will murder us!"

"No; I give you my word that you shall not be injured," said the girl.

"There; now you ought to be satisfied," said Tom.

"Maybe the gal can't keep her word," said one of the greasers.

"Yes I can. I'm the queen of the tribe, and whatever I command, that they will do."

"So you'll stay here a while," said Bob.

They scowled and talked to each other vehemently in Spanish.

"Now your hands shall be freed," said Lucia.

She said something to one of the Yaquis, and he stepped forward and cut the cords binding the youths' wrists.

They rubbed their wrists and arms and got the blood circulating again.

Then the girl spoke to a couple of the Yaquis, and they conducted the two Mexicans back to the hut and a guard was stationed over them.

The Yaquis now dispersed to their huts, and left Tom and Bob and the girl talking together.

"You will come to my house, please," said Lucia. "We can be more comfortable there."

They went to the log house and entered and took seats. It was a good-sized cabin, with two rooms, and was furnished with blocks of wood for seats, and a flat stone for a table. Skins of wild animals were spread over the blocks and in the smaller room was a bunk, with skins of animals to sleep on.

The three had a long talk, and came to an understanding. Lucia was to control the Yaquis and keep them from bothering the two youths, and they were to prosecute their search for the treasure. Also, Lucia was to send a dozen of the Yaquis to guard the sloop, as it was feared that Bonsel and his gang might run away with the vessel, which would be awkward, as it would be a long and tiresome trip to Guaymas overland, with the treasure.

Lucia showed Tom and Bob a picture of her father. It was a photograph he had taken, evidently, before he left the East, for it had the name of an Elmira artist on it.

Tom and Bob both said that James Melville greatly resembled Tom's mother.

"He is my uncle, without doubt," said Tom.

"Yes, I am sure of it," agreed Lucia; "and I am so glad!—oh, so glad!"

(To be continued.)

INTERESTING TOPICS

PLATE IN HIS SKULL.

Walter Wilson of Oshkosh, Wis., has two steel rods in place of legs, two steel feet where the regular feet once were and a silver plate where part of his skull is lacking. But his hands are all right. He has pleaded guilty to forgery in the Municipal Court here, and has been sentenced to three years in prison.

FOOD VALUES.

Proper food is one of the chief factors in building and keeping a strong, healthy body.

Learn to eat the right foods.

Eat at regular times. Do not eat all the time. All machinery needs periods of rest.

Eat different kinds of foods; no one food can supply all bodily needs, but too much variety may be harmful.

Eat simple, plain food.

Eat slowly and chew your food thoroughly.

GAVE 3,000 PAIRS OF SHOES.

Three thousand pairs of shoes were donated by the people of Livingston, Mon., for the French and Belgian war victims. The shoes were collected by a committee of Rotarians and will be boxed and shipped to New York, where they will be taken overseas.

Several hundred pairs of new shoes were donated by patriotic citizens. The lot will make approximately half a carload. The Boy Scouts assisted in the collection of the shoes.

GERMAN COINS FOR BULLETS.

Treasury legal sharps were confronted by a knotty problem over the disposition to be made of seventy-six minor German coins contributed by a woman in Tennessee recently.

"Please melt these into bullets," wrote the woman to Secretary McAdoo, "and let them help pay the Kaiser in his own coin."

Since the War Department can use neither silver nor bronze bullets the coins probably will be melted in the mint and their value as metal returned to the giver in war savings stamps.

PEACE MESSAGE PUT IN GERMAN SAUSAGE.

France's message to German troops that they will do well to surrender and give the password "Kamerad Republique" is being carried to the German lines in sausage meat and in other ways. Small vials containing the message on oiled paper are dropped in Germany from Allied airplanes, and relatives who hope for peace slip the messages into things they send the troops. Many surrender, and surprisingly few spies have been found among their number.

Information to this effect was given here to the House Committee on Postal Expenditures, which was hearing a representative of the Committee on Public Information on the propaganda campaign being carried on in Germany by the Allies.

THE COLORED AMERICAN CITIZENS.

Americans of every section, of every class, and of every race have answered the call of their country.

"Twelve million colored people have rallied to the defense of their country in this crisis, and will do their full share in helping to win this world war for democracy," Dr. Robert R. Moton, principal of Tuskegee Institute, successor to Booker T. Washington in that office, said recently in an address at the Twenty-seventh Tuskegee Conference.

The colored American citizens will do their part in producing foodstuff on the farm, in conserving food in the home, and in fighting in the trenches in Europe, said Dr. Moton, and in addition the colored ministry and the colored teachers will preach and teach thrift among their race.

It has been impossible to obtain figures on the amount of Liberty Loan bonds purchased by colored Americans in the first and second loans, but it is known that according to their means and ability the colored race were very loyal and active and most liberal subscribers to the loans.

FOUND STARVED TO DEATH WITH CURRENCY SCATTERED ABOUT.

Gold and currency scattered on the ground nearby, and two certified checks aggregating \$3,000 in his coat, quite a distance away, added mystery to the death by starvation of J. H. Behan of Boulder, Col., whose body was found one day seven miles in the mountains from Murietta Hot Springs, near Riverside, Col.

Behan arrived at Murietta Springs from Los Angeles on January 20. He disappeared from his room at the springs that evening. Two days later a hunter saw Behan. The latter took off his coat and ran. The hunter saw that Behan apparently wore a nightgown under his coat. He thought possibly Behan was hunting.

Sheriff deputies said they accompanied the hunter to the scene, on information that he had failed to return to the springs. They found the coat, containing, among other papers, certified checks for \$2,000 and \$1,000 drawn on Walker Brothers' bank, Salt Lake City. Later the body was found.

Private detectives here are investigating the coincidence of the departure from here of Behan with the time of cashing forged certified checks from a Long Beach bank, in which banks of Los Angeles were defrauded of \$3,000.

WILD WEST WEEKLY

NEW YORK, MARCH 22, 1918.

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

The marriage of George Wingenbach, of Akron, Ohio, and Miss Eva Weyer, of Jackson culminated a romance that began last summer, when the bride in a spirit of fun wrote her name on a box car in transit. Wingenbach, in Akron, saw the name and wrote to her.

Louisiana has a new product. It is cactus candy. The cactus is peeled, dipped in hot syrup or molasses, and coated with powdered sugar. Many cane syrups and other similar products are common in every home in the South, so the confection is easily made, says Popular Science. Sugar mills are also taking it up as a side product to be turned out during the slack seasons of the year.

England claims to have the largest flagstaff in the world, but they had to come to the North American continent to get it. It was a present from the British Columbia Government to the mother country and was cut from a forest near Vancouver. The staff is 215 feet long and weighs 18 tons. It has been placed at Kew Gardens and will not be erected until after the war is ended, when Londoners intend to make the flag raising one of the features of the celebration of the victory over the Kaiser.

In the shadow of the Manhattan Bridge nestles a veritable fishing village, which consists of nine two-story houseboats moored side by side so as to form a solid row and sheltering the fishermen and their families, on whom New York is dependent for a good part of its fish supply. But unless you are familiar with the vagaries of fish and the localities in which they school in certain seasons you need not go in search of this village. Often it disappears from a locality overnight, without any farewells, reappearing as quietly a few months later.

A cablegram received from General Pershing informs the War Department that ninety enlisted men

among the American Expeditionary Forces are candidates for entrance to the U. S. Military Academy. Under a recent law the President is authorized to appoint and keep filled a roster of 180 enlisted men at the Military Academy. Men from all branches of the Service are entitled to stand the examination for appointment, provided they are between the ages of nineteen and twenty-two years and have served as enlisted men not less than one year. The cablegram from General Pershing denoting the interest of men now abroad reads: "So far ninety candidates for West Point Military Academy entrance examinations here, of whom twelve were designated in United States. Request that 100 sets of examination papers be mailed and the same number sent by an officer."

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

A visitor at an insane asylum asked if the clock was right. "If it war, dae you think it wad be here?" retorted a patient.

Percy—Lend me a five, old chap, and I'll be everlastingly indebted to you. Reggie—that's just what I'm afraid of, old fellow.

There had been a domestic spat at breakfast. "You monster!" snapped the matron, who was always scolding, "you are not like my two former husbands. They were tender men." "I never doubted that they were tender, Maria," ventured the meek man, "when you kept them in hot water all the time." And he just cleared the front porch two yards ahead of the rolling-pin.

A lady passing through the negro quarter in Mobile, Ala., heard an old woman chanting a dirge-like tune. "Auntie," she observed, "that is a mournful song you are singing." "Yassum," was the response, "I knows it's mo'nful, but by singin' dat song an' 'tendin' to my own business I 'spect to git to Heaben."

"This is a busy wire, I tell you," roared the excited man in the telephone booth. And from the other end of the wire came this: "I don't care, I will talk." "Get off the wire!" shouted the other, beside himself. "You don't want to talk with me." But it was no use. "I've paid ten cents to talk," came the answer, "and I'm going to do it." And talk he did, busy wire or not.

Little Willie Jones, while picking blackberries, was stung on the calf of his leg by a poisonous insect. By bedtime his leg was so swollen that his mother began to be very much worried, so the first thing the next morning she went to his room to find out if the swelling had gone down. "How is your leg, son?" she inquired. "Come, look—it's swelled 'way up," he answered proudly. "My calf has got big as a heifer since last night."

BREAKING A TRAIN

By Alexander Armstrong.

I was running on a road in Virginia about thirty years ago.

It was a sort of free and easy train, and though we went at great speed a part of the way, we used to brake up for almost anything that required a stop.

If I saw a man coming across the fields with a bag and an umbrella in his hand I shoved in the throttle.

Every Monday a gentleman by the name of Knight used to board my train after the "snack."

As we were a free and easy party, I used to go in and get something to eat.

It was served in a dilapidated old hotel, kept by a seedy Virginian, for the land in that part of the State was exhausted by too much tobacco cultivation, and it was hard work for some of the people to get a living.

The lunch was composed of fried bacon and "ash-cake," or "Johnmycake" baked in the ashes.

I noticed that Mr. Knight always had a russet leather bag in his hand.

It was not more than a foot long, and six inches wide.

It appeared to have something in it, as he went down to Richmond and back to Millford on my train.

He was never without the bag.

As he came back the same day he did not need to carry clothes with him, and I concluded that he had something in the bag which was connected with his business.

After I had seen him every week for six months. I got acquainted with him, and was not a little interested in his bag.

Being a lineal descendant of Mother Eve, I had some of her curiosity.

I wanted to know what was in that bag.

I asked Darracott, "the captain of the train," as he was called.

He knew no more than I did, except that Mr. Knight always carried it in his hand all the journey.

I came to the conclusion that the bag contained something of great value.

One forenoon, while we were at the "snack," I noticed a fellow by the name of Cobley, who seemed to be trying to get acquainted with the owner of the mysterious bag.

Cobley was an unpromising "shoat," whose record was anything but clean.

He had served one sentence in the penitentiary for stealing a horse, and was a general "bummer" along the line of the railroad.

He claimed to belong to one of the first families of Virginia, but I think none of them were inclined to own him as a relative.

Mr. Knight did not seem to covet his friendship, and treated him very coldly, as he did every stranger that addressed him.

He repulsed the fellow as pointedly as the occasion seemed to require.

"I should like to talk with you about a matter of interest to both of us on our way down to the city," said Cobley, seating himself by the owner of the bag at the table where the "snack" was served.

"I have no desire to talk with you about any matter, sir," replied Mr. Knight, very stiffly.

"Do you mean to insult me?" demanded the bummer.

"By no means; but I claim the privilege of choosing my own companions on my journey," added Mr. Knight, firmly, but courteously.

I left the room, and as I mounted the footboard of the machine I saw Mr. Knight and Cobley get into the rear, or third car of the train.

So far as I could see there was only one other passenger in it—a man that wore an old bell-crowned white hat.

Just before we came to the long down grade, the bell rang, and I stopped the train, having a fatherly interest in all connected with my charge.

I looked back and saw the white hat leave the rear car, and crawling through the line of trees the birds sitting on the fence had planted there, he struck across the lot.

I went ahead again.

For some reason or other I could not help thinking of our weekly passenger, who was now alone in the rear car with Cobley.

It occurred to me that he might get mad enough to do the owner of the russet bag an injury.

I had a man on the engine with me who was learning the business.

He knew the machine perfectly, but he had to learn the road.

He had already been with me enough to be familiar with the crossings and grades.

I left him in charge of the machine, and climbed over the tender into the forward car.

There were a dozen people in this car, and only three in the next one; while the third contained only Mr. Knight and Cobley.

I found Darracott in the first car, enlightening a Northern gentleman in regard to the resources of Virginia, which was a favorite occupation to him when he could find the proper auditor.

"Did you know that Cobley was alone in the rear car with Mr. Knight?" I asked as I passed through the car.

"Well, what of it?" asked the captain, bestowing a blank look upon me.

"Cobley got riled up with him before we left Millford, and I am afraid they will have trouble," I added, thinking it strange that he could not see the point of the argument.

"Cobley hasn't pluck enough to do any harm," said the captain, with a laugh, as he turned to his auditor.

I continued my walk through the train till I came to the rear car.

When I reached the platform of it, I saw Cobley with hatchet in his hand.

"What are you about?" I called to him, for I regarded the hatchet as a deadly weapon he intended to use upon the owner of the russet bag.

The bummer made me no reply; but, with one blow of the implement, he split the wooden shackle which connected the rear car with the next one.

I could see no reason why the villain had done this. The first effect of detaching the car was to cause it to fall behind the train.

My first impulse was to rush to the engine and increase the speed, so as to keep clear of the loose car.

I should have done so if the conduct of Cobley had not attracted my attention.

I saw him go to Mr. Knight, for he had left the door open, and present a pistol at his head.

I did not hear what he said, but a moment later I saw him, with the russet bag in his hand, coming to the forward platform.

When he reached it, he stood looking from one side to the other, and appeared to be bewildered. I understood him perfectly now. He had made a blunder.

He had not taken any notice of the grade, and had supposed the car would soon stop after it had been detached from the train.

He had robbed Mr. Knight of the bag he so carefully protected.

Possibly Cobley knew what was in the bag, if I did not.

It was just about big enough to contain a large bundle of bank bills.

Mr. Knight had been up and down that grade times enough to know it well.

In a moment more he proved that he understood the situation better than the scoundrel that had robbed him of his treasure.

He went to the rear end of the car, and selecting the best place he could find, he jumped off.

There was no brake on the car, and it was as impossible to stop it as it would have been to stop a bolt of lightning.

Cobley had secured his prize, whatever it was, and now he wanted to get off the car before it bore him into the region of deputy sheriffs and constables.

But he had not the pluck to jump off.

I did not wait to see any more of his movements; I hastened to the engine, and on the way I counseled the passengers in the middle car to move into the forward one.

I hastily told Darracott the situation, and he ordered me to keep out of the way of the loose car.

That was what I intended to do, if I could; but five miles ahead I had to meet the up train.

When we came to the heaviest of the grade I found that the loose car was gaining upon me at a fearful rate.

I saw that it was no use to fight the battle any longer.

The loose car would wreck the whole train if it struck it after it stopped on the siding.

We were rapidly nearing the station.

If we were not switched off, as usual, we should come into collision with the up train.

Something must be done immediately.

I sent the extra engineer back to the second car with directions to cut away the shackle when I whistled three times.

It was clear enough to me that, in order to save the lives of the passengers and prevent a greater destruction of the company's property, I must smash up two passenger cars.

The loose car was still a mile behind me.

I reversed my machine, and soon brought it to a full stop.

Then I gave the three whistles.

"All clear!" shouted the extra engineer.

I started again, increasing the speed as fast as possible.

But I had not gone a quarter of a mile before the loose car struck the middle car of the train.

I don't know just how it was done, but the end of the middle car rose up into the air, and seemed to come down on the top of the other; and where they met was a heap of ruins.

I ran the train back to the spot.

We found the body of Cobley under the wreck.

There was no life left in it, and it was badly mangled.

By his side was the russet bag, for which he had made a trap to sacrifice his own life.

One side of it had been ripped open, and I saw that it contained bank bills.

I took it on the engine with me, and I don't know that any other person saw it.

We threw aside the wreck, and I ran back till we met Mr. Knight.

He had saved his life and saved his money.

He was the cashier of a country bank, and went every Monday to Richmond to change his bills.

He allowed no one to know who or what he was, if he could help it.

The country was a gainer for Cobley's mishap; and he made nothing, but lost his life, by "Breaking a Train."

SOUP FROM POULTRY TRIMMINGS.

By cutting off the heads of turkeys and chickens in butcher shops it is estimated that something like 1,000,000 pounds of good food are wasted during holiday weeks, when public attention is especially turned to poultry. Poultry necks make nutritious soup, says the Butchers' Advocate, and so would the feet if the consumer took them home and removed the skin with a blunt knife. Giblets too often go into the butcher's waste box. It is suggested that if the consumer does not want the head, necks, feet, or giblets, butchers might make a low-priced specialty of them for soup purposes, educating consumers to their values.

FROM ALL POINTS

NEVER TOOK VACATION.

After having been in business fifty-one years, during which time he never missed a week day at his store and never was out of the village over night, Hans Jorgenson, furniture dealer and undertaker of Chatfield, Minn., retired recently. He has had one of the most remarkable business careers of any man in Southern Minnesota.

Coming from Denmark in 1866, Mr. Jorgenson lived first at Eau Claire, Wis. In 1867 he came to Chatfield and has been in business here ever since.

MOST DANGEROUS PERIOD OF LIFE.

If a man is going to commit a crime during his lifetime, the chances are that he will do it at the age of twenty-nine. It is a curious fact that statistics have shown that man is more dangerous at this period of his life than at any other.

The general supposition is that men have attained the highest development of their mental and physical powers at twenty-nine, and they are supposed to be able to distinguish between right and wrong and to realize the consequences liable to follow the indulgence of either.

Next to the age of twenty-nine, the greatest number of criminals have been aged twenty-one, twenty-seven or forty-five years.

WHOLE TOWN CUTS WOOD.

The home fires of Lawrenceburg, Ind., will be kept burning with wood for a time.

More than 900 physicians, lawyers, bankers and other professional men and residents passed the day recently chopping cordwood at three camps established on the river bank. Night found them with 600 cords of wood cut.

This wood will be sawed up at the various mills and delivered to buyers by dealers who cannot supply coal.

Prices will be graduated according to the ability of the buyer to pay for the fuel. Professional men must pay \$6 a cord, wage-earners \$3, and those unable to pay will be given wood free on application to the Associated Charities.

DWARF ELEPHANTS NO MYTH.

And so travelers' tales are, after all, true; dwarf elephants do exist in mysterious Africa. It had been reported over and over again, and as often discredited by the learned as a mere natives' tale. But now, in London, the remains of two of the pigmy elephants of the Congo are to be seen, and naturalists will have to revise their theories. Seven years ago an expedition was sent out by the Paris Museum of Natural History to endeavor to learn something definite about the reputed aquatic elephants. A herd was seen, but the animals vanished so rap-

idly into the waters of Lake Leopold II that no report could be made of them, and once more the story was scouted. Even in the absorption of war, this disclosure of a fragment of the unknown is curiously interesting. Will Africa never cease to yield up things "monstrous and new"? Flaubert would now have something to add to the wealth of Africa, "ostriches, giraffes, hippopotami, negroes and powdered gold," which he so delighted in.

RECREATION FOR SOLDIERS.

The Playgrounds and Recreation Association of America has issued a report of its activities undertaken at the request of the War Department Commission. The chief business of the organization has been to safeguard the environs of the training camps and arouse neighborly interest for the soldiers among the people of the contiguous cities so as to give them high ideals of service.

One hundred and seven recreation secretaries are now at work, and 170 cities and small communities have been organized for service. To link up camp and community, census cards have been made which give a man's church, fraternity, college, professional, and trade affiliations, and put him in touch with the groups in the cities with which his former interests and relationships would associate him. His hobbies and recreations are also known, so that he may receive acceptable invitations.

CORN FOR COB PIPES A BIG INDUSTRY.

Probably not one smoker in a hundred who likes the "real American" pipe—the corncob—it is aware of the fact that many acres in Ohio, Illinois, Missouri and Nebraska are devoted to raising corn for the especial purpose of producing cobs suitable for fashioning into pipe bowls.

The grain itself is marketed, of course, but the cob on which it grows is the real harvest, and is cut carefully into proper lengths, smoothed and polished, the soft inner pulp being gouged out by specially constructed machinery.

It is possible to buy a set of corncob pipes, in a nest of six, with an amber mouthpiece, mounted in silver, that will cost as much as \$7.50. The growing of the corn for cob pipe purposes and the manufacture of the pipes by machinery are the conception of one of the tobacco trust's experts.

The corncob pipe now goes to every country in the world where men smoke, and is especially in favor in Australia and New Zealand, where it is regarded as characteristically American, because it suggests the idea of Yankee ingenuity.

The brier is the favorite with Englishmen who are probably the greatest pipe smokers in the world.

A FEW GOOD ITEMS

GAS FROM WOOD.

Prof. Orin F. Stafford, a University of Kansas graduate, who is now at the head of the department of chemistry at the University of Oregon, has discovered a way in which waste wood may be utilized and gas made from it.

Because of the scarcity of coal Prof. Stafford believed if wood could be substituted so as to produce gas it should be made to do so. His experiments show how it can be done.

The test by Prof. Stafford shows that eight cubic feet of gas of a heating value equal to 480 British thermal units a cubic foot may be obtained from one cubic foot of dry firewood. The cost of generating the gas is very low after the apparatus has been installed. It is hoped his experiments may solve the fuel problems of the whole Northwest.

FIRST NAVAL WOMAN.

Miss Virginia Stoddert Moore, now a first class yeoman in the American Navy and the first woman to be accepted for naval service at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station, had a special reason for desiring to do her "bit." It was that her great-great-grandfather was the first Secretary of the American Navy.

He was Benjamin Forrest Stoddert, who was appointed Secretary of the Navy in 1793 and served until 1807. His portrait now hangs in the Hall of Fame at Washington and she disliked the idea of confining her war work to knitting or Red Cross activities.

So she studied at Polytechnic Institute to become a stenographer and applied for service as a first class yeoman. Although she has not yet been definitely assigned to duty, it is expected she will be attached to the force of the Kansas City Naval Recruiting Station.

REMOVING BATTLE SCARS.

As the war progresses, the means employed for treating the wounds of the soldiers become more and more numerous. A new application of electricity is one of the latest treatments for removing disfiguring scars, straightening out shriveled muscles and making a man his own handsome self again, however badly he may have been wounded, says the Pittsburg Press. In the French method, the electrode connected with the negative terminal of the battery is applied directly to the scar. The electrode is covered by a thin sheet of sterilized asbestos. This is soaked in a suitable caustic solution before the application. The remaining positive electrode is placed on the other side of the limb, directly opposite the wound. Then, when the current courses

through, the color of the scar slowly begins to fade, the skin begins to soften, and the scar to thin out once again. After a few months treatment of at least one hour each day, all but the most obstinate scars will have disappeared.

A HEROIC RESCUE.

An unusual accident and still more unusual rescue occurred recently, says the March Popular Mechanics Magazine, when a British seaplane, emerging from a dense mist, crashed against the top of a slender radio tower. The impact was so great that the mast was bent far out of line, the aerial engine wedged between the interstices so that the plane was suspended almost at a right tangle, and the pilot catapulted onto one of the wings, where he lay unconscious. A strong wind added terror to the situation. Fortunately, three sailors were at the time painting the steelwork some distance below, and one of them climbed up the inside of the tower to the point, nearly 200 feet above the ground, where the craft was fast. Crawling out on the wing, he reached the senseless airman and prevented him from falling until his two comrades were able to pass him a rope. Tying this about the pilot's body, he lowered him to the ground.

GUATEMALA'S SHAKY CAPITAL.

The Guatemalan Government is seriously considering a plan to abandon Guatemala City as its capital and move to Quezaltenango, because of the recurring subterranean explosions that continue to shake the present capital, according to H. Charlton Houghton, representative of British commercial interests in Guatemala.

"Earthquakes are not worrying the Guatemalans," said Mr. Houghton, "but the subterranean volcanic explosions are breaking out in some places all the time are. Most of the people are convinced that the entire city of Guatemala will be swallowed up some time.

"The work of rebuilding the city since the first shock has been greatly hampered by the subsequent shocks. New craters are being formed in the most unexpected places all about the city. Some day one is going to belch forth right in the heart of the city."

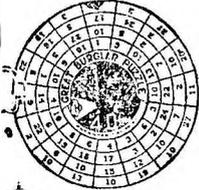
It is reported that the Guatemalan Government has engineers at work seeking a new site. One possibility being considered is the erection of a magnificent capital on virgin soil on the coast at a point which heretofore has escaped volcanic shocks. Quezaltenango is described as being little better than Guatemala City so far as freedom from earthquake shocks is concerned.

MAGIC PUZZLE KEYS.

Two keys interlocked in such a manner it seems impossible to separate them, but when learned it is easily done. Price 10c, by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn., N. Y.

GREAT BURGLAR PUZZLE.



The latest and most fascinating puzzle ever placed on the market. Patented May 30. It consists of four revolving dials, each dial containing 16 figures. 64 figures in all. To open the safe these dials must be turned around until the figures in each of the 16 columns added together total 40. The puzzle is made on the plan of the combination lock on the large iron safes that use a combination of figures. Persons have been known to sit up all night, so interested have they become trying to get each column to total 40 in this fascinating puzzle. With the printed key which we send with each puzzle the figures can be set in a few minutes so as to total 40 in each column.

Price 15 cents; mailed, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn., N. Y.

SNAPPER CIGAR.

The real thing for the cigar grafter. If you smoke you must have met him. He sees a few choice cigars in your pocket and makes no bones about asking you for one. You are all prepared for him this time. How? Take one of these cigars snappers (which is so much like a real cigar you are liable to smoke it yourself by mistake) bend the spring back towards the lighted end, and as you offer the cigar let go the spring and the spring gets a sharp, stinging snap on the fingers. A sure cure for grafter. Price, by mail, ten cents each, postpaid or three for 25c.

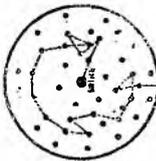
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

SCIENTIFIC MIND READING.

Wonderful! Startling! Set, entice! You had a friend a handsome set of cards on which are printed the names of the 28 United States Presidents. Ask him to secretly select a name and hold the card to his forehead and think of the name. Like a flash comes the answer "Lincoln, Washington," or whatever name he is thinking of. The more you repeat it the more puzzling it becomes. With our outfit you can do it anywhere, any time, with a whisper. Startle your friends. Do it at the next party or at your club and be the lion of the evening. This was invented by a famous magician. Price, with complete set of cards and full instructions, 12 cents, mailed, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE SPIDER WEB PUZZLE.



A very interesting little puzzle. It consists of a heavily nickle plated and brass ring. The object is to get the ring from the side to the center and back. This is very hard, but we give directions making it easy. Price, 10 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

FRANK SMITH, 483 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

CACHOO AND ITCH POWDER.

As Itch powder, Cachoo and Bombs are unmarketable, we cannot accept orders for less than One Dollar's worth of an assortment. They can be sent by express only, on which we will prepare the charges.

WOLFF Novelty Co., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

DIAMOND SQUIRT RING.



A handsome Gilt ring set with a brilliant, a clear-cut diamond. Attached to the ring is a small rubber ball filled with water, which is concealed in the palm of your hand. As your friend is admiring the stone in your ring, a gentle pressure on the ball will throw a small stream of water into his face. The ball can be instantly filled by immersing it in water, when you are ready for your next victim. The ball is entirely hidden in the palm of your hand, and only the ring is seen.

Price 35 cents, by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d Street, N. Y.

JAPANESE MAGIC PAPER.



The latest, greatest and best little trick perfected by the ingenious Japanese is called Yaka Imita. It consists of two packages of specially prepared paper, one a sensitized medium, and the other a developing medium. The process of manufacture is a secret. By wetting a white sheet, and pressing a pink sheet on top of it, the white sheet will develop quaint photographic scenes, such as landscapes of Japan, portraits of Japanese characters, pictures of peculiar buildings, Gods, temples, etc. These pictures are replicas of actual photographs, and print up in a beautiful sepia brown color. Intensely interesting for both old and young. Price, 12c per package, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF Novelty Co., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

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Everywhere to ride and exhibit the new "Ranger" bicycles. They are completely equipped with electric light and horn, carrier, stand, tool tank, counters-hoke, mud guards, and anti-skid tires, choice of 44 other styles, colors and sizes in the famous "Ranger" line of bicycles.



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